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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE DESIGN AND CONCEPT OF MILTON'S HELL

by

ROLAND CHEYNE TEAPE

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Design and Concept of Milton's Hell" submitted by Roland Cheyne Teape in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

This thesis, titled "The Design and Concept of Milton's Hell," is a study of the poet's realization of Hell in the epic work Paradise Lost (1667 & 1674). It investigates the fitness of such habitation for the fallen angels, particularly apropos the hells of two of his models, Dante's Inferno and Virgil's Hades in the Aeneid.

In the pursuit of these goals, special attention is devoted to the peculiarities of the Miltonic construct, to the originalities in architectural design and the unique combinations and modifications of antecedent ideas. The literary traditions from which Milton's Hell grew therefore play a significant part in the paper. To explicate his inventiveness, a chapter is devoted to the determination of Hell's parameters before occupancy, noting the nature of the material, physical Hell created by God as fit receptacle for the intellectual dross in His universe. Another chapter investigates the peculiar aspects of the occupied Hell, determining what changed in the prepared waste place with the advent of the fallen angels. A theory of divine ignition is advanced here to explain Milton's post-psychomachic inferno.

A third chapter looks at what deals with the psychological as opposed to the local and material Hell in the poem. This, along with the pre- and post-occupation considerations, comprises the essential content of the work. In addition to the particular onus of each section, the questions of "fit habitation," yes or no, and Milton's faithfulness to or divergence from literary tradition are addressed.

An introductory chapter, dealing with the matters just discussed and with methodology in general, precedes and foreshadows the critical interpretation, and a concluding chapter based on the findings of the paper completes the thesis. Its overall aim is to assist the reader to depict the complex and singular Miltonic Hell, to elucidate its quantities and qualities, its horrors and agonies, both physical and psychological.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis uses Merritt Y. Hughes's two annotated editions of Milton's epic Paradise Lost as primary material. Through these, Hughes has become my guide to the truth of the antiquities the poet uses, and hence my benefactor in the quest to be included among Milton's "fit audience." Less vicariously (for I do not know Hughes personally), I am deeply indebted to Dr. James Forrest--a professor of great learning and patience in the instruction of matters concerning John Milton--who has supervised this endeavour. Thanks, too, to Prof. H. A. Hargreaves, my second reader, and sundry professors and other personnel in the University of Alberta English Department, especially Maud Bal for her quiet governance of the Salter Reading Room, and Dr. Gordon Moyles for his excellent instruction in bibliographical matters.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The setting of a full sixth of John Milton's epic poem Paradise Lost is Hell. In this part, as in the whole, the poetic conception is an amalgam of classical, early Christian, and medieval Christian data filled out with elements of the geographical understanding of his day. The purpose of this paper is to study Milton's poetic realization of Hell as a fit habitation for his fallen angels, the "self-tempted under God."

It should be made clear at the outset that this work is, strictly speaking, a dissertation and not a thesis. Rather than a presentation or defence of any specific argument, it is an overview and discussion of various viewpoints pertaining to Milton's idea of Hell. Architectural design and the appropriateness of the environment as he sees them are considered in relation to previous representations such as Virgil's Aeneid (ca. 19 B.C.), St. Augustine's psychological hell of the unredeemed in the Confessions (ca. 399), and Dante's Inferno (ca. 1308).[1] Where references to elements of Dante's subterranean hell or Virgil's Hades are given, no claim for absolute originals is made, though it is obvious Milton patterned more than a few aspects of his conception on both.

Before launching into this subject, I would like to look briefly at both the motivation to consider evil and the development of the poet's conception. There is arguably a necessity to treat of evil. Roland Mushat Frye, in God, Man, and Satan, says that with the devil, "we are brought back to 'accommodation,' to the symbolic and metaphoric

treatment of a force which may be interpreted in no other terms."[2] This necessity arises because Satan is "essentially irrational" and "teleologically indefinable." If this is the case, evil, whether considered as the psychological seed-material in Satan or as the spacio-temporal receptacle for that dark matter, "can be intelligently treated . . . only through fantasy and poetry," and it is in just such ways that Milton treats it, in the images of his compendious medieval Hell.[3]

Frye defends the necessity for an "accommodative" treatment of evil by noting that "the demonic symbolism provides not a 'mere' mythology . . . but a strategy for understanding, and so for dealing with, certain inescapable aspects of the reality living men must face."[4] This jibes with the field of thought that sees the entire Bible, or large portions thereof, in terms of reality figured as literary art and myth. It also explains Milton's choice of subject for his epic. To him Hell was a deeply pondered interpretation of the state and character of the "accuser," the Satanic personification of the negativity common to the fallen state of humanity.

Regarding the evolution of this interpretation, it is noteworthy that in all the poet's attention to the subject, only the early Nativity Ode ("On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" [1629]) deals explicitly with the climactic annulment of Hell's powers. That is, Milton wrote no poetry about the end times except brief references such as that found in Book X of the epic. There, at the time of the disillusioning of the fallen angels who gloated over Satan's successful temptation of the humans, God looks ahead to Christ's act of atonement for man's sins when He says,

at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave at last
Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jaws.
(X, 633-37)

Ironically, in the paired poems "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" (ca. 1631), distinct reference to hellish matters is found only in the former, the song to Mirth, where the introductory ten lines are an exorcism of "loathed Melancholy," just as the commensurate passage in the latter poem expels "vain deluding joys." The classical images of light and darkness in each case are meant to emphasize the matter by contrast, using a parallel structure and formulaic exhortations to convey the intentional aye and nay of poetic mood.

In "L'Allegro," the use of classical notions of the hellish condition and landscape are prefatory not only to the poem in place, but also to Milton's mature conception in Paradise Lost. The poem therefore has value as a cameo of his developing perception of Hell. Certainly the inferno of the epic is a descendant of the "lurid sulphur and the fires of Tartarus" of the early school poem "In Quintum Novembris" (1626).[5] "L'Allegro," written perhaps eight years after this Latin work on the Gunpowder Plot, begins to paint Hell's landscape originally, though with a strong classical tinge:

Hence loathed Melancholy
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,
In Stygian Cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-Raven sings;
There under Ebon shades, and low-brow'd Rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
(Complete Poems, 68)

The only similarly clear reference in "Il Penseroso" derogates fancies "likest hovering dreams,/ The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train."[6] The Greek slumber god, Morpheus, a deity of dreams who dwelt in a cave in the cloudy and perpetually dark maritime land of Cimmeria, is a cognate of Hell.

Melancholy's dismissal in "L'Allegro" does evoke a Promethean sort of exile more reminiscent of the utter despair of some of Blake's heroes and anti-heroes than that conceivably accruing to Dame Melancholy, whose very essence is self-sought solitude.[7] Again, however, the passage may be taken as a clear indication of expanding parameters in Milton's vision of Hell. It is noteworthy, in any case, that in this set of poems which so notably develop both real landscapes (in recording the whole round of the day) and the opposed emotional landscapes of cheer and melancholy, we find for the first time in the poet's canon a Tartarean scene of Virgilian depth.

Thus some of the classical figures in Paradise Lost are seen to have appeared in Milton's poetry before his epic was written. The mythical "Chimaeras" of II, 628, for example, appear first in Comus (1634), where the attendant Spirit speaks of "dire Chimeras" which "the sage Poets taught by th' heav'nly Muse,/ Storied of old in high immortal verse. . . ."[8] These, along with "Gorgons and Hydras," are among the fearful Greek conceptions Milton used to portray the sort of phantoms revealed to the devils in "darkness visible." More particularly, he intended to evoke awesome and dangerous psychological images to parallel the fallen angels' woebegone mental state. Such ghastly and lethal composites of real creatures signify the mutated condition of the fallen angelic psyche.

The poet's idea of Hell is seen to develop after the publication of his epic as well. A multitude of typal elements have been perceived in Samson Agonistes (1671) relating to Christ's passion, and thus we have a poem by Milton which deeply and explicitly considers the psychological aspects of Hell, as pondered by the blind and captive Nazirite Samson.

It should be noted that, in sense at least, all Milton's pre-epical references to Hell regard the abode of devils and/or the spirits of their human victims, not an unoccupied Hell. Indeed, there is little in Dante or those other poets who have dealt with the subject about the unpopulated, potential locale. This was a subject, rather, for the ontological and cosmogonical theorizing of philosophers and theologians throughout the ages. Nonetheless, my second chapter is about the inert, unspirited Hell, emphasizing setting in order to clarify the reader's image. But setting in Milton's Hell is primarily the background for dramatic action rather than the scientific or even artistic description of a wasteland, though such description is often an effect augmenting the grandeur of the poem.

Another area best dealt with early is the meaning of terms. Milton's unoccupied Hell is the inert place God set aside for punishment. It is ignited by His wrath and populated by angels who have become demons. The term "demon" is widely used in literature in the sense of "guardian spirit," a sense more frequently attached in the classics to the kindred term "genius," the tutelary spirit of a person, place, or institution. John Keats refers in his "Ode to Indolence," for example, to his "demon Poesy."[9] The root δαίμων lends itself extraordinarily to the adjectival form "demonic." Milton used the expression in coining the name Pandemonium, combining the Greek πᾶν, "all," and δαίμων, "spirit" or "deity."

Intended here, rather, is the sort of malignant supernatural being Milton so aptly portrays. Bergen Evans's comments in the Dictionary of Quotations are useful as a further guide to divine and demonic names:

> The names of deities are indissolubly connected with the beings they designate. The name of YHWH is still shrouded in unspeakable mystery.
>
> The Devil's name was in some ways even more dreadful, for if it were pronounced he might appear. Satan simply means "the adversary." Devil, like god, is a generic term. Fiend = "enemy." Lucifer was--presumably--the name Satan held in Heaven before his fall . . . . Lactantius, in the 4th century, said [his actual name] was Demogorgon--the most dreaded name of all dreadful names ("the dreaded name of Demogorgon"--Milton, Paradise Lost II.965) . . . . The name has been applied to assorted demons and spooks.[10]

It is noteworthy that of all the beings in Milton's Hell, amorphous, ravening Death is most like the traditional Demogorgon.

The word "entropy" is defined as "the measure of the degradation or disorganization of the universe." One might say, then, that Milton's Hell, in fact any hell, and the Chaos of Paradise Lost as well, by definition involves a condition of maximum entropy. This situation is based on the modern understanding of the English word "hell" as both the name of a local place of torment and the definition of a state of punishment. Etymologically, "hell" connotes the more explicit "place of concealment." But this, applied to that place which is utterly remote and sealed off from divine influence, is invalid, for the first Person of the Christian Trinity is omniscient, the second Person harrowed Hell between his death and resurrection, and the third Person is present in the devils as in all intelligential beings, though it is obviously inoperative among the fallen.

Chapter II looks at the material make-up of Hell and demonstrates that, like all corporeal elements of Milton's cosmos, it originated in

Chaos. In regard to this preternatural realm, A. B. Chambers takes note of the poet's categorical statement in Christian Doctrine that matter is good, yet remarks that, nonetheless, the battling "embryon atoms" (II, 900) of preinfernal and preterrene chaos are clearly opposed to God.[11] The moral ambiguity surrounding original matter supports what I will say about the neutrality of Milton's local, material Hell. A moral quality is brought to what is today seen as a scientific problem (the origin and essence of matter) in addressing the question:

> The Christian Doctrine argues for matter's fundamental goodness . . . stating that matter "proceeded incorruptible from God and that "even since the fall it remains incorruptible as far as concerns its essence." It is not merely a good, but also "the source for every subsequent good."[12] Yet Paradise Lost makes it clear that matter may be "depraved," if unessentially, in many ways. "Celestial soil" (VI, 510) supplies Satan the matter for gunpowder and cannon in the heavenly war against God. Hell too is material and therefore abstractly a source for good, but it is nonetheless
>
> A Universe of death, which God by curse
> Created evil. (II, 622-23)[13]

In his analysis, Chambers determines that chaos exists in what More called the condition of "Impossibility, which would be the state of all things, were there not a God."[14]

In a work of general parameters such as this, it is best to dispense with the list of particular wickednesses the catalogue of named devils in Book I entails. More fruitful is a comparison of various sections with the materials which are likely to be their ancestors. For example, the delving and smelting of "the massy Ore" in Hell's plain may be compared with Virgil's armoring in Latium when, by the "twin gates of war" observed by all "in awe, for fear of savage Mars,"

> Five sizable towns, in fact, with anvils cleared,
> Now turned out weapons: these more tough Atina
> Haughty Tibur, Ardea, Crustumeri,
> Towered Antemnae. Workmen fashioned helmets,
> Hollow and hard headgear, or for light shields
> Bent wicker frames, while others molded breastplates
> Out of bronze or trim greaves out of silver.[15]

Punitive craftsmanship is seen to be most skillful in both poems. The outcome in Latium was slaughterous war, met between an earnest Trojan army and the indigenous forces of mid-Italy, who were led in some parts by just such demonic characters as are described in Milton's Hell.[16]

Though not strictly introductory, I will include here some examples and illustrations of origins of Milton's ideas, to demonstrate their edifying quality. George Whiting, in his brief article "Tormenting Tophet" (1947), includes many such. There is some basis, for example, for the observation he lists by Cowper that in his reconstruction of Hell, scripture offered Milton "only the most meagre details," such as the lake of fire and brimstone. But taking little directly from scripture, the poet yet creates a biblical ambience in his work by means of trope and allusion. The Pharaonic incident of Exodus 14, integrated into the epic simile describing the condition of the fallen angels on the burning lake (I, 304-11), is a case in point. In addition, exceptions to Cowper's claim are numerous enough to cast doubt upon his evaluation. And indeed, as Professor Rajan says:

> It is sometimes argued that the only freedom the scriptures gave Milton was freedom to reiterate the scriptures . . . . it cannot be denied . . . that the scriptures are used creatively in . . . the powerful expansion of the allegory of Sin and Death from the small seed of James . . . . If some of the scenes in Heaven fail, it is . . . because [Milton's] mode of presentation requires celestial values to be announced as absolute and so makes them incapable of engendering the complex responses of poetry. Evil can be entered into imaginatively before it is dismissed; but the good is sometimes merely declared and then celebrated in hymns.[17]

This rings true, clearing up some of the ambiguities the reader encounters. It was perhaps the contentious but pleasant imaginative flux of dealing with Milton's engagement with evil that led Rajan to comment on the Hell-describing portions of the poem, as it has many another critic.

But let us return to the question of the utility of the poet's use of scripture. Whiting rightly points out that the epic's Hell is by and large a highly imaginative treatment of ideas and materials generally known in seventeenth-century Europe. He continues:

> As proof one may analyse Henry Greenwood's tract entitled "Tormenting Tophet . . . ." The test of the tract is Isaiah xxx. 33: "Tophet is prepared of old; it is even prepared for the King: he hath made it deepe and large: the burning thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord like a River of Brimstone doth kindle it."[18]

The critic cites still another seventeenth-century writer who may have influenced Milton's epical conception, the author of the Last and Learned Worke of the Foure Last Things (1639), Robert Bolton.[19] Bolton deals at some length with Hellfire as the eternal, wrathful breath of God, about which Whiting says:

> The "black fire of hell" surpasses our ordinary fire as ours the fire painted on a wall . . . . Our fire is blown by an airy breath, "the other by the angry breath of the great God, which burnes farre hotter than ten thousand rivers of brimstone."[20]

These various references are surely enough to demonstrate the sorts of origins upon which Paradise Lost was based, if chiefly from the poet's own milieu. Others will be added, and the classical sources examined, yet here it is wise to concur with Professor Rajan, who says:

> The roots of Paradise Lost are widespread and complex and vast amounts of erudition have been spent in not always fruitful discussion of its "sources." Masson who mentions twenty-five poems as possible "origins" of the epic comes to the healthy conclusion that further consideration of them is laborious nonsense.[21]

Rajan observes that "if the body of the epic is the encyclopaedic and hexameral tradition and its stiffening sinews the Bible, the shaping spirit is surely that of the classics," and he sees the key to the epic's classical influence in "Milton's complex and vital use of literary reminiscence."[22]

Last of all, what may be said about the psychological Hell in Paradise Lost? Dame Edith Sitwell points out that one aspect of the human fall from grace is "the alienation . . . of man's mind from a sacramental universe," an estrangement that occurs "at that point in his evolutionary development when his mind is separated from his instincts."[23] Milton's portrayal of the apostate angels makes it clear that Sitwell's understanding of human nature has the same force when applied to "Th' infernal Serpent . . . with all his Host/ Of Rebel Angels" (I, 34-37), in whom the perverted angelic virtues correspond to the lost human instincts. "Alienation . . . from a sacramental universe" is a salient factor in the poet's interpretation of psychological Hell.

Exile from God, however, along with eternal physical torment, is only a part of final punishment. Among earlier stages J. E. Duncan includes

> a psychological or "spiritual death" which brings a loss of right reason and the liberty to do good and "that slavish subjection to sin" in which "sin is its own punishment." (Christian Doctrine, I, 12 and 13)[24]

This is an excellent definition of the inner Hell. It is the progression of this in Satan which Milton chronicles so masterfully in his epic, giving us an infernal prototype of gradual human corruption.

CHAPTER II

UNOCCUPIED HELL

In Milton's first description of his conception of hell, the "prison ordained in utter darkness" of I, 71-72, he says of the devil:

> There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
> With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
> He soon discerns (I, 76-78)

In these lines "there" refers to the burning lake upon which the devils were first prostrated in bewildered stasis, whereas the "Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire" which have reduced them to this condition seem to be part of the divine thunder which first overpowered them in Heaven. More properly they are its atmospheric residue, the sustained concatenation of "Eternal wrath [which]/ Burnt after them to the bottomless pit" (VI, 865-66).

The image is one of God starting up, with the manifest power of the warfaring Son who acts as His right arm, the furnace which thereafter defines the condition of Hell, an ignition effected by the very act of expunging the rebels from Heaven. It seems by this that the "ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd" of Hell (I, 69), though the apostates' "portion set," may be conceived as having lain latent as merely potential punishment before the arrival of Heaven's angry storm-wind ignited it. The aim of this chapter is to determine what Milton tells us about this dormant Hell.

What is the place designed by omniscient God to punish Heaven's and Earth's rebellious before any rebel has appeared in Creation? It is

at some point a closed, unoccupied room among the many mansions in the Father's house, a room especially made for punishment but not yet operative, a place inchoate and potential.[1] Explicit references to this Hell are few in Paradise Lost, and of almost negligible proportion when set against the numerous passages describing the post-exilic inferno. Such passages fill Books I and II and are augmented by various episodes of hellish activity elsewhere in both the cosmos and the corpus of the poem. But it is just these vivid descriptions of an occupied Hell of painful extremes, the subject of the next chapter, that supply by implication considerable grist for the imaging of the unoccupied Hell, and a perception of the purely potential furnace in turn helps the reader understand the vision Milton had of the functional arena of divine punishment.

That there was, in Milton's conception, a pre-exilic place of reparation is clear from Raphael's description of Satan's fall to Adam:

> Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw
> Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled
> Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
> Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
> (VI, 866-70)

Not only does this personification establish a pre-existent Hell, but Milton oddly designates the demon receptacle "she," although the whole thrust of his description is based on a male orientation (with the exception of Satan's daughter Sin), particularly its psychological manifestation. The reference may foreshadow the original sin of Book IX, biblically and Miltonically attributed first to the female of the human species. Whatever the symbolic value of his anthropomorphic Hell, Milton believed in its local existence. In his introduction to the epic, Hughes

says that for the poet

> Heaven and Hell both definitely outlast the physical universe. He agreed with St. Augustine and many other theologians that they could be imagined without limit as states of the spirit as long as their historical and local existence was not denied. (Complete Poems, 182)

The location of the historical Hell is only ascertainable in the physical terms the epic's parameters permit, however, and the chief of these is distance. The portion set in fire is, Milton tells us, "As far removed from God and light of Heaven/ As from the Centre thrice to th' utmost Pole" (I, 73-74). Hughes annotates these lines thus: ". . . the scene directly recalls Virgil's picture of Avernus as twice as far under the earth as heaven is above" (Aen. VI: 577-79 [cited in Complete Poems, 213, 73-74n.]). His annotation in the earlier edition is:

> Centre was regularly used to mean the earth . . . . The cosmic proportions here vaguely recall the Aeneid (VI, 577-79), but the utmost pole is a part of Milton's conception of the created universe as encased in a shell with its nether pole sunk in Chaos and its upper pole pointing toward the empyrean heaven. (Paradise Lost, 11)

This place, horrendously remote from the source of existence, is bare and inorganic except for the ashen phantoms of the proscribed tree which God rears up in horrid judgement of the devils in Book X.[2] A reinforcing detail of its lifelessness appears, perhaps, when Satan stands on "the bare strand" (I, 379). Here the poet may not have intended to portray a lakeshore merely hot and sandy, i.e., a beach, but a sere addition to the general wasted landscape. The shore is not, as in earthly temperate zones, surrounded by thirsty plants, nor does Milton imagine the wind-torn, blasted trees of Gothic hells.

Without eschewing literature for theology, we may see the

authority upon which Milton's Hell is founded attested to by his great precursor Dante, through the device of a warning sign dimly written above the lintel of Hell's Gate in Inferno: "ME DID DIVINE AUTHORITY UPREAR; ME SUPREME WISDOM AND PRIMAL LOVE SUSTAIN. BEFORE I WAS, NO THINGS CREATED WERE SAVE THE ETERNAL, AND I ETERNAL ABIDE" (Inferno, III, 5-8). This provenance is followed by the famous exhortation "RELINQUISH ALL HOPE, YE WHO ENTER HERE" (ibid., line 9). Milton's interpretation of this divine ordination of perdition occurs when God says:

> him who disobeys
> Mee disobeys, breaks union, and that day
> Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
> Into utter darkness, deep ingulft, his place
> Ordain'd without redemption, without end.
> (V, 611-15)

The important ideas here regarding Hell's attributes and characteristics are those of "utter darkness," the "deep," and the connotation of containment in the term "ingulft." The notion of enforced exclusion from the beatific vision which I discuss later is part of the last.

The concept of predestination cannot be excluded from the discussion of Hell's meaning. The predestinarian bias so evident in other parts of Paradise Lost, especially in the various divine speeches evoking God's omniscience, is found in lines about Hell such as those following Satan's first understanding that "Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd" (I, 70). As ever in considering things heavenly, we are with Milton up against the problem of explaining godlike timelessness in spacio-temporal terms. Yet surely it may with some justification be concluded that if spiritual justice is eternal, the universal dungeon too must have been from the beginning, even as Dante claims. The difficulty in such a supposition arises from the reader's very human trouble (the

same obstacle Milton's Satan encountered in rationalizing the initial stages of his rebellion) understanding primal creation.

A. B. Chambers refers to a passage from Plato's Timaeus in explanation of prematerial existence:

> Fire, Water, Earth, and Air possessed indeed some "impressions" [ἴχνη] of their own nature, but were altogether in such a condition as we should expect from anything when deity is absent from it. (Timaeus, 53B, cited in Chambers, 64, and 38n.)[3]

Though both modern and ancient interpreter are dealing here with the unordered state of chaos, the final passage about "anything when deity is absent from it" is, simply, the clearest understanding possible of a predemonic, unoccupied Hell. God created Hell the "furthest" from His heavenly seat, and after doing so He, like the wrath that drove the rebels to their exile, retired towards that throne.

But if ignition and the eternal flames it produces are the sole alteration in Hell at its inhabitation, then presumably its topography in the latent and operative states remains constant. Unoccupied Hell may be seen as neutral in itself, a dormant place of Earth-like features made "for evil only good" solely as a result of its positioning at the nadir of creation. In terms of redemptive sustenance its distance from the divine fount of life alone is its curse. Indeed, among created things the placement of latent Hell is furthest from God, who is the source not only of light but of heat also. The terrible furnace of Paradise Lost once lit, then, is perhaps an analog of what is man-made, a heated house, in contrast with the natural and self-sufficient divinity. When activated by divine ignition and filled with rebellious angels, the mandate of its fashioning and placement is fulfilled, but there is none to feel the chill of death when there is none to experience or observe

the shades of death. For example, an isolated lime-pit wears away nothing, yet may be perceived as potentially useful for corrosive purposes. When Hell's utility is brought into service a meteorological dynamic is set up that will continue forever, and this is the single exception to the idea of an unchanged Hell. But things do not erode or diminish by combustion there; they simply run. What is in any way lessened or altered is simultaneously replenished or replaced once the local Hell is populated. With that indwelling, fire springs up everywhere, classical rivers feed a burning lake, and though Milton somewhat inconsistently claims that a frozen landmass "Thaws not, but gathers heap" (II, 590), the ever-consuming but forever unconsumed aspect of the surroundings suggests a dynamic of melt and flow, fume and snow in many ways similar to Earth's own balanced meteorology.

If in fact nothing was alight or alive in the incipient Hell, then neither did anything move there before the sordid actions of the devils began. At the greatest distance from the source of all life it is natural to expect that "all life dies, death lives," but when Milton says this is the place where

> Nature breeds
> Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
> Abominable, inutterable, and worse
> Than Fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd
> (II, 624-27),

he undercuts his proclamation of universal death unless he means us to understand the monstrous and prodigious things allegorically. What is malformed in body and mind still lives, as the strained existence of the devils <u>in extremis</u> reminds us. If the Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras of line 628 are merely personifications of abstract qualities, then they

represent the various diseases of the corrupted mind, and should not be viewed as present in the unbedevilled Hell.

In fact, everything pictured in Milton's Hell except the basic topography is potential from the pre-psychomachic perspective. If infernal flames retain their earthly illuminative quality, but with the arcane lustre of darkness visible rather than light, and if they are absent from unoccupied Hell, then visible darkness too is merely potential in that pre-demonic state. Such a state, distant from primary light, would probably have the normal quality of darkness, the opacity we are accustomed to think of as actual rather than latent.

Milton records the existence of features in the primitive murk after it has been preternaturally lit in some detail. About the topography of features he is less definite, however. From the burning lake Satan and Beelzebub espy a

> dreary Plain, forlorn and wild,
> The seat of desolation, void of light,
> Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
> Casts pale and dreadful. (I, 180-83)

Later this plain becomes the site of Hell's metropolis "Built like a Temple" (I, 713), with adornment moulded from the metallic ore in "a Hill not far whose grisly top/ Belch'd fire and rolling smoke" (I, 670-71). With this volcano as the location of its mine it is fitting that Milton designates the city's architect Mulciber or "founder of metals," another name for the Roman god Vulcan, who is said to have built a forge under explosive Mount Ætna, and from whose name the word volcano is formed.[4]

It is possible to conceive of empty Hell as either without a lake or with a frozen lake. In any case, the lake of Paradise Lost Milton imagined as central, as indicated by the exploring devils who, as from an

axis,

> in Squadrons and gross Bands,
> On bold Adventure to discover wide
> That dismal World, if any Clime perhaps
> Might yield them easier habitation, bent
> Four ways thir flying March (II, 570-74)

Also suggesting the lake's centrality is the logic of liquid flow in a cosmic scheme such as that provided by Professor Walter C. Curry, in which Hell occupies the lowest concavity of an orbic universe.[5]

The rivers of the inferno are those of classical Hades, and are found flowing into the burning lake, one would suppose from origins in the frozen continent. But, like the fiery areas, no part of that icy mass diminishes. In fact, the hellish rivers are sealed off from such melt by the fifth classical stream, Lethe, which subdivides it from fiery Hell. Milton aptly makes the river of oblivion the boundary between the two meteorological regions with their concomitant extremes of pain. Thus what there is of a natural dynamic sketchily emerges, but requires the reader's acceptance of its divine ordering, with the attendant mysteries.

To cope with the peculiar unfathomables of Miltonic Hell, it is helpful to view it alternatively as exclusively psychological. Otherwise, it is only possible to use a Platonic model and consider it a lesser reality in spite of the supernatural characteristics of its inhabitants, its inexplicable illuminating darkness, and its conservational energy transfers. Such a course still makes it evident that the laws governing Hell extend beyond human comprehension.

The investigating devils, however, pursue their fourfold exploration

> along the Banks
> Of four infernal Rivers that disgorge
> Into the burning Lake thir baleful streams;
> Abhorred Styx the flood of deadly hate,
> Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
> Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
> Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton
> Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
> Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
> Lethe the River of Oblivion rolls
> Her wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks
> Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
> Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
> Beyond this flood a frozen Continent
> Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
> Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land
> Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
> Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
> . . . . . .
> the parching Air
> Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of Fire.
> (II, 574-91, 594-95)

Increasingly disillusioned by their discoveries, "th' advent'rous Bands" are depicted "roving on/ In confus'd march forlorn" (II, 614-15): "through many a dark and dreary Vale/ They pass'd, and many a region dolorous" (II, 618-19), and, crossing numerous mountains both frozen and flaming, and meeting the diverse obstacles listed in line 621, they find only "shades of death, a Universe of death" (II, 621-22).

This completes the topography of occupied Hell logically cognate with the unpopulated area, although there is nothing to say ignition did not alter or create landforms such as the volcanic hill near the burning lake. The sense of unalterability constantly made manifest regarding natural processes casts doubt on the occurrence of such changes in great scale, however, recording rather the flow and flicker and dim visibility of "Hell flames and fury" (II, 61).

One natural feature of pre-demonic Hell does remain, a peculiarity not easily noticed in the hellish construct because with the

arrival of the devils it was quickly plugged with an artificial edifice impregnable except by guile. This is Hell's Gate, an opening in "the fiery concave tow'ring high" (II, 635) through which the apostates were cast as a prisoner is cast through a dungeon door. The captive hears the cell door closed by the jailer: similarly, God's "Ministers of vengeance and pursuit" (I, 170) seal the rebels in as they retire to Heaven, their mission accomplished. Milton shows us the gates when, to Satan embarked from the nether fires on the expedition to despoil God's latest creation,

> at last appear
> Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid Roof,
> And thrice threefold the Gates; three folds were Brass,
> Three Iron, three of adamantine Rock,
> Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
> Yet unconsum'd. (II, 643-48)

It is moot whether these doors stood open but intact in the upper limit of unused Hell or whether God's agents set them in place on their return Heavenward. The ninefold gate plugs Hell only temporarily in any case: Satan's daughter Sin tells him:

> The key of this infernal Pit by due,
> And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful King
> I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
> These adamantine Gates (II, 853-53),

but she promptly favours her obscene originator by opening the way, leaving the devil free to depart Hell and ending Milton's description of it.

Changes are wrought in Hell by the devils who become its first inhabitants, but these are largely the subject of another chapter. By way of especial contrast with its inherent characteristics is the quickly commenced building of a capital to rival Heaven's and the concomitant ravaging of the volcanic hill and industrialization of the plain to smelt

and found its materials. There is also the anchoring in Hell of the causeway Sin and Death build across Chaos to permit easy intercourse between Hell and Earth, a fixing fitted to the natural opening:

> broad as the Gate
> Deep to the Roots of Hell the gather'd beach
> They fastened, and the Mole immense wrought on
> Over the foaming deep high Archt, a Bridge
> Of length prodigious joining to the Wall
> Immoveable of this now fenceless world
> Forfeit to Death (X, 298-304)

At both ends of this connector, the poet tells us, "with Pins of Adamant/ And Chains they made all fast, too fast they made/ And durable" (X, 318-20). The dimensions of this giant jetty, a "Mole immense" which affords "a passage broad,/ Smooth, easy, inoffensive down to Hell" (X, 304-5), give some idea of the enormous doorway Milton envisaged, for the lower footing of the span begins at Hell's Gates. The gap in upper Hell the closed port fills is gigantic:

> the Gates wide op'n stood,
> That with extended wings a Banner'd Host
> Under spread Ensigns marching might pass through
> With Horse and Chariots rank'd in loose array
> (II, 884-87)[6]

The Hell on which Professor Curry bases his model is hollow, sitting like a heavy gas at the bottom of the sphere of creation. Such a conception agrees with much rendered by Milton. When Satan addresses his tarnished angels lying semi-conscious on the burning lake, we are told that "He called so loud, that all the hollow/ Deep of Hell resounded" (I, 314-15). The word "deep" as applied here and everywhere in Paradise Lost refers to the awful remoteness from the realms of light. Hell is, after all, a "bottomless pit" with foundations cast too deep and bound too fast to come unmoored, even at "hearing th' unsufferable noise" of the

rebel angels' fall.[7] And a "hollow deep" implies volume, as does a call that resounds therein, both clearly indicating a physical existence. Yet barring the sounds of its creation, which are indefinite because Milton mentions but does not describe it, and later the sounds of its occupants' false bravado and woe, it is an utterly quiet place. No patter or drip of rain is heard there, nor splash of the Greek fire that eventually formed its liquid state, and no fire crackles, for what burns does so eternally and is unchanged by the burning. Indeed, as Hell is seen to contain ice and snow after occupancy but apparently obtains its fiery character only upon the ignition accompanying inhabitation, some readers may conceive of its nascent state as one of cold, which jibes with modern knowledge of empty space and planets with heatless cores. In Book VI the archangel Raphael explains the reprobate to Adam:

> For strength from Truth divided and from Just,
> Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise
> And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
> Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
> Therefore Eternal silence be thir doom.
> (VI, 381-85)

This would seem to preclude even the natural sounds of the meteorological pit a partly frozen, partly fiery landscape implies.

A basic myth is indicated with the presentation of the evilly anthropomorphic character of Hell itself: "Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,/ Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things" (II, 624-25). Having been nine days in God's petrific wrath, the fallen angels are left forlorn of even that source of His attention, for its mission of transporting and igniting is complete. Borne Hellward on its angry stream, they make of their destination a conflagration when they reach it, just as a furnace is lit by a tossed match, and thus their

subsequent existence occurs ironically amidst effects of their own generating. The Hellbound passengers have themselves become the fuel of their blast-chamber. Left by divine wrath, they replace its function exactly with their unrepentant wickedness, becoming the generators of their own anger, the embodiment of Hell's kindling. What remains is a quieter but no less potent fire that might be termed God's "wrath inherent," as opposed to the "wrath transportive" that, having "laid the fiery Surge," ceases "To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep" (I, 177) and secures Hell's Gate behind it in departure.

The Miltonic Hell, then, is made up of what was made explicitly to punish the apostate angels, but also of what they bring with them, of what they create by their very residency. These two, the causal ignition of God along with the never-ending reignition of the devils, are different not in kind but in degree, for all hellfire exists by divine decree, and its ends of pain and remorse are the same. But to tell what the fiery deluge actually is after the transportive utility has been withdrawn from it is no easy task, as those who have struggled with the notion of "darkness visible" have discovered. Milton's poetry provides one strong and undoubtedly correct group of possibilities, presented as a synthesis of the classics and his own Christian thinking and supplying above all a sense of the inexorability of God's judgement. A particular manifestation of this unconditional fixing is Hell's sealed nature, lamented by its chief occupant in his Pandemonium address to the demonic potentates:

> Our prison strong, this huge convex of Fire,
> Outrageous to devour, immures us round
> Ninefold, and gates of burning Adamant
> Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.
> (II, 434-37)

During the long fall preceding the punch-drunk landing in Hell, the character of eternal wrath regarding its position vis-à-vis that of its cargo is ambiguous. In the muse's response to Milton's invocation in Book I, which sets the scene for his in medias res beginning to the epic, she tells him that Satan was "Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Sky/ With hideous ruin and combustion down/ To bottomless perdition" (I, 45-47; my emphasis). This indicates forced travel amidst God's turbulent anger. Again, in Book VI Raphael tells Adam in his relation of the war in Heaven that "headlong themselves they threw/ Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrath/ Burnt after them to the bottomless pit" (VI, 864-66; my emphasis). Depicted here is a pell-mell fall with divine fire hard following so as to prevent reascent, just as, once the recreant human pair have been dispelled from Paradise, there stands "Wav'd over by that flaming Brand, the Gate/ With dreadful Faces throng'd and fiery Arms" (XII, 643-44). In this case the rebel angels are like weak animals herded in panicked flight before the harassing fire, and the subsequently recorded physical debasement of their angelic natures must be credited to Chaos, through which they are routed.

Their ejection from Heaven "with hideous ruin and combustion" in the former quotation, however, indicates that they were freighted to Hell amidst rather than in front of the divine wrath, and this allows us to perceive their disfigurement as an effect of their mode of transport. This seems the more likely interpretation, as during Satan's flight solus through Chaos he was plagued and nearly deterred by its conditions, but he was not altered by them. All this permits the view that hellfire was born in heavenly fire, even as the revolt that led to eternal exile had its malignant seed in Heaven. Psychologically, of course, the cultivation

of that seed in and by the still fertile mind of the archangel Lucifer signalled the verification of his fall from blessedness. Its kernel was that of free will, and by choosing to grow it with ambition rather than gratitude the great angel made himself Satan, chief of the damned.

This works in more than a psychological way on the "myself am Hell" motif, for if Lucifer's heavenly sedition was the kindling flicker of hellfire, and the blazing wrath of God's warfaring Son not only replied to but also stoked the flame, then after nine days' fall within the hot vengeance of that wrath, the fallen angels can easily be perceived as themselves the embers out of which all their tomorrows' pains would grow.[8]

Hell as either physical locality or state of mind is, by St. Augustine's definition, a place devoid of goodness: "For evil has no positive nature: but the loss of good has received the name 'evil'" (City of God, XI, 9).[9] Related to this is the cosmological statement from the Timaeus which incorporates the negative definition of deity, whereby the undeveloped world was "altogether in such a condition as we should expect from anything when deity is absent from it." This interpretation of Earth's genesis ought chiefly to be compared with that in the Bible: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness moved upon the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2). Milton's depiction of Chaos agrees:

> his dark Pavilion spread
> Wide on the wasteful Deep: with him Enthron'd
> Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
> The Consort of his Reign (II, 960-63)

The parallels between what is wasteful and what is void, what is defined by darkness and what is "Sable-vested" and nocturnal, are obvious.

It is also noteworthy that fire, the most unstable of the four classical elements cited by Plato, and therefore the state most closely resembling that of the maelstrom, is also the essential condition of most hells, including Milton's. The poet describes the "wild Abyss" of Chaos as

> The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,
> Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
> But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt
> Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
> Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
> His dark materials to create more Worlds
> (II, 911-16)

Shown here is a formless, void, and dark field of uncreatedness out of which the existence of "more Worlds," should God wish any, will spring. Thus just as the psychological origin of Milton's Hell is angelic pride in the face of the Son's lordship, its physical origin is a field of the three biblical negations "upon the face of the deep," personified in Paradise Lost as Chaos.

Milton gives us a good deal more about this chaotic starting place of created things, much of which can be related back from the definitions of the elemental substances which underlie Heaven, Hell, and Earth. A look first at the originals of material existence reveals a practically limitless potpourri of anarchic and often violent components. Sin and Death draw the more solid of these together from "the waste/ Wide anarchy of Chaos damp and dark" (X, 282-83), into which they have flown with intuitive sensibility of the alteration in the fabric of things after the humans' fall. The result is the Hell-Earth bridge, created from a disordered realm wherein the horrid architects, of

what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging Sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell.
(X, 285-88)

Construction proceeded as

The aggregated Soil
Death with his Mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a Trident smote, and fix't as firm
As Delos floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move,
And with Asphaltic slime (X, 293-98)

Hughes annotates lines 294-95 and 297, respectively:

i. Out of the warring elements in chaos--"hot, cold, moist and dry" (II, 898)--Death separates the cold and dry atoms for the masonry of his bridge and petrifies them with a touch of his mace . . . .

ii. Milton imagines Death as able, like the Gorgon, Medusa, in the myth of Perseus, to turn everything at which he looks into stone, and yet as working like a practical mason with asphaltic slime made of hot and moist atoms to consolidate his bridge. (Paradise Lost, 324)

The "asphaltic slime" Death found and utilized in Chaos may be compared with the fuel in Pandemonium's "Lamps and blazing Cressets fed with Naphtha and Asphaltus" (I, 728-29). As this fuel is garnered from Hell, the comparison lends weight to the hypothesis that Chaos is the seed-field of all created things. The argument is supported by two separate lines, both from the most comprehensive description, the devils'-eye-view at the end of Book II. The first is the forthright allegorical statement about dominion in that boundless, dimensionless, anarchic realm of "eldest Night/ and Chaos, Ancestors of Nature" (II, 894-95, with latter emphasis my own). There follows the implication of creation from this anarchy already mentioned, which speaks of the four classical elements therein

"mixt/ Confus'dly . . ./ Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain/ His dark materials to create more Worlds" (II, 913-16). Though Milton does not explicitly say so, it would seem to follow that the "world" of Hell, found intact and occupied in the in medias res beginning, was also created from Chaos. Hughes points out that the "embryon atoms" of the domain are Ovid's "seeds of things" in Metamorphoses.[10]

The materials from which the gravitational theatres of Heaven, Earth, and Hell are made are similar in Paradise Lost. Lucifer's troops in Heaven seek to construct cannon for use against their obedient brethren, and

> Part hidd'n veins digg'd up (nor hath this Earth
> Entrails unlike) of Mineral and Stone
> Whereof to found thir Engines and thir Balls
> Of missive ruin (VI, 516-19)

In seeking ore to found their weapons

> in a moment up they turn'd
> Wide the Celestial soil, and saw beneath
> Th' originals of Nature in thir crude
> Conception; Sulphurous and Nitrous foam
> They found (VI, 509-13)

The feed-stock of ignited Hell is "ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd" (I, 69), and when Satan has rallied and with subtle malice reinvigorated his troops on the flaming lakeshore and incited "Full Council" to plot against God, he must construct his war room from such available materials. Accordingly, "A numerous Brigad" of excavating devils begin mining the nearby volcano,

> whose grisly top
> Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
> Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
> That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,
> The work of Sulphur. (I, 670-74)

The shining and gloss of all but the top of the volcanic hill presumably reflect the illumination, however it may be explained amidst "utter darkness," of the fire at its apex.

Less ambiguous is the similar constitution of aggregated materials everywhere in Milton's cosmos. The substances "Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,/ Of spiritous and fiery spume" (VI, 478-79) of Heaven are cognate with "the massy Ore" (I, 703) of which Hell's metropolis is built, and with the subterranean resources alluded to on Earth when Heaven's soil is quarried ("nor hath this Earth/ Entrails unlike"). Michael's revelation to fallen but pre-industrial Adam finally sees the biblical type of metallurgical man:

> In other part stood one who at the Forge
> Labouring, two massy clods of Iron and Brass
> Had melted
> . . . . . .
> [and] the liquid Ore he drain'd
> Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
> First his own Tools; then, what might else be wrought
> Fusile or grav'n in metal. (XI, 564-73)[11]

The internal substances, found in foamy, spiritous, or solid metallic form, are seen here to be common to the three surficial settings in Milton's epic, and indeed apparently do originate in the turbulent cloud "Instinct with Fire and Nitre" (II, 937) of surfaceless Chaos.

In the segment at the end of Book VI describing what I have termed the "ignition" of latent Hell, the place is personified to indicate the burdensomeness of containing rebels against Heaven in any part of Creation. The receptacle itself or local Hell recoils from the discomfiture of its designated load, and "would have fled/ Affrighted, but strict Fate had cast too deep/ Her dark foundations." Similarly, the primal discord through which the devils fall does not merely admit their passage, but

"confounded Chaos roar'd,/ And felt tenfold confusion in thir fall" (VI, 871-72). Here, as in Satan's rise from the fiery lake in Book I (ll. 226-27), is the image of a belaboured transmitting space, for even to the already weltering and anarchic Chaos, in the exiles' passage "so huge a rout/ Incumber'd him with ruin" (VI, 873-74). Milton's point is that no section of the universe in which part of the order is in revolt can remain unstrained. This is partly a function of the disruption in the flow of things caused by sin, partly the necessarily violent reordering of existence by divine judgement. When the second Person of the Trinity rode on "burning Wheels" into heavenly battle, "The steadfast Empyrean shook throughout,/ All but the Throne itself of God" (VI, 833-34). Again, rid of the corrupted third of its population, "Disburden'd Heaven rejoic'd" (VI, 878).

Such precipitate and powerful changes in the basic fabric of things indicate the heinousness of outright rebellion against God and the magnitude of His judgement, a relation analogically comparable to a group of piratical and vicious criminals and the impregnable penitentiary they are incarcerated in. The latter is the man-made antitype of Hell, but in itself it is merely a construct, however remote from the scenes of normal life and however useful only for imprisonment it is. Such too is Milton's Hell, though there is that in his various comments on its ordination that indicate its inherent wickedness, a distinction which should be taken literally only in the psychological sense.

In Book IX earthly sin ramifies the sin begun in Heaven, and the universal tension caused by the angelic expulsion is transposed into the historical sublunary sphere: "Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,/ Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe/ That all was

lost" (IX, 782-84). Again, when Adam, "fondly overcome with female charm," seconds Eve's dire incontinence, a terrene reverberation is felt: "Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again/ In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan" (IX, 1000-1001). These earthly disorderings are local, yet being of earth-shaking character they retain the epic proportion fitting to a description of original sin.

In light of his theologically correct distinction between Satan's malice-wrought fall and man's less serious lapse (he by the tempter being seduced), it is evident that to the poet the repercussions of mortal sin are universal, whereas those of veniality are more particular. Judgement of devils is absolute; that of humans is selective. In this judgement redeemability is the criterion. Satan and his angels embrace corruption ex nihilo, therefore their condemnation is eternal, and their prison as personified by Dante says "I ETERNAL ABIDE." On the other hand, Adam and Eve were tempted, and their punishment contains the intrinsic possibility of its own end.

As humans who achieve the end of their punishment are not to be found in Hell, however, I will leave the human pair to another discussion of Milton's epic, noting only that in his depiction of them the poet advises well against the Hell that results from seeking the proverbial fountain of youth or philosopher's stone, except as they denote God's and not human immortality.

CHAPTER III

OCCUPIED HELL

The authority on which Milton's Hell exists is amply attested to by the rebel angels themselves, but its decreed nature and mechanics are best seen in the deliberative and legislative scenes centering on God the Father and not through the jaundiced eyes of those furthest below. Yet the scenes around the divine throne lack impact, and their didactic content is often obscure, even while the imagery remains inspiring. The finality and strength of sacred fiat which Milton emphasizes throughout his epic are tersely stated once and for all by Dante near the beginning of the Inferno, by the warning inscribed above Hell's Gate:

> THROUGH ME THE WAY IS TO THE CITY OF WOE:
> THROUGH ME THE WAY INTO THE ETERNAL PAIN;
> THROUGH ME THE WAY AMONG THE LOST BELOW.
> . . . . . .
> RELINQUISH ALL HOPE, YE WHO ENTER HERE.
> (Inferno, III, 1-10)

Who, then, were those first hopeless who occupied Hell? The distinction should be made between the awful physical effects of God's wrath proper and its results, that is, between the angelic fall or "demonizing" and its effects, the demons. While eternal fury burnt after the horde falling to "bottomless" perdition, the devils' advent in Hell is shortly followed by a slackening of wrath. Satan says to Beelzebub,

> the Sulphurous Hail,
> Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
> The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice
> Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,

> Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,
> Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
> To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
> (I, 171-77)

Now, within the argument for the implied ignition of the devils' new abode in this treatment of their inhabitation, the "red lightning" is the actual igniter. As far as the devils are concerned, this lightning completes the agent function of God's wrath. Thereafter, Hell is lit, to be the just receptacle and instrument for the eternal incineration of spirits actively rebellious under Him. The "hideous ruin and combustion" (I, 46) with which the rebels fell and the "headlong flaming" (I, 45) of their descent precede and lead into their hellish state. Again, these images may be compared to the explosive burst of kindling gas when a furnace is lit. The simile describing Satan's first impression of the local inferno tells how "A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,/ As one great furnace flamed" (I, 61-62). In fact, both the ignition argument and the one I shall make concerning the colour of Hell's flames are furthered by this fireplace comparison, because natural gas now commonly used as a heating fuel burns with both an orange and a blue tint. In spite of the violence Milton's images of hellfire suggest, however, the horrific atmosphere of the fall through Chaos is distinct from the apparently more even combustion of Hell itself. For all his guile in speechmaking, Satan's observations on the abatement of divine fury are literally descriptive. The pain of residence is less than that of transportation, and Hell can be, but by a devil never is, endured with hope.

Milton's theodicial bent is affirmable. There <u>is</u> a divine use for devilry. It is indicated by looking at the sorts of angels in

existence, after the rout of one third of the heavenly host, as those who dwell in fire as opposed to those who dwell as fire. The first chapter of Hebrews, differentiating between the attributes and duties of the Son and angels, says "Of the angels he says, 'Who makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire'" (Hebrews 1:7). These "flames of fire" constitute the wrath of God which Chaos saw driving the rebels before it through his unstructured realm:

> I saw and heard, for such a numerous Host
> Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
> With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
> Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n's Gates
> Pour'd out by millions her victorious Bands
> Pursuing. (II, 993-98)

Satan calls these justly wrathful angels "Ministers of vengeance and pursuit" (I, 170).

In the same chapter of Hebrews the correspondent further polarizes the two groups of angelic beings by asking, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14). This verse goes far towards defining the wider purpose of devilry. It is possible to see hints of divine intent in having a hellish contingent of demonic nature "for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation." This is the viewpoint which sees life as a requisite testing and tempering process. From it have emerged the literary themes of life as journey and life as warfare. Beelzebub dimly foresees this real demonic usefulness when he ponders God's design in exiling his sort from Heaven,

> Strongly to suffer and support our pains
> That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
> Or do him mightier service as his thralls
> By right of War, whate'er his business be
> Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire
> (I, 147-51)

Indeed, among the questions and decrees of the writer to the Hebrews are also many instructions as to correct character, yet these need not obviate the usefulness to God of an obstreperous cadre in His creation.

Satan, warlord of these condemned, is utterly absorbed in hubris and cannot see the ramifications of the divine plan, cannot perceive that his own demonic existence is one such ramification. His pride leads him to glorify "the unconquerable Will/ And study of revenge, immortal hate,/ And courage never to submit or yield" (I, 106-08), in spite of his lieutenant's suggestion that God may have undisclosed purposes in forcing the demonic exile.

In fact, when Milton reveals his conception of the divine plan in Book X, God the Father remarks to the Son that Sin and Death, seemingly triumphant on earth, "know not that I call'd and drew them thither/ My Hell-hounds." Satan cannot see that, whether in Heaven, Chaos, Hell, or on Earth, whatever has function is an agent of the divine. When he incites warfare in Heaven he taunts Abdiel with a false notion of angelic self-creation and absolute self-determination:

> We know no time when we were not as now;
> Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
> By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course
> Had circl'd his full Orb, the birth mature
> Of this our native Heav'n, Ethereal Sons.
> (V, 859-63)

This sort of self-importance is indicative of the state of reprobation seen by Origen:

> When the soul is found apart from that order and connexion and harmony in which it was created by God for good action and useful experience and not at concord with itself in . . . its rational movements, it must be supposed to bear the penalty and torture of its own want of cohesion and to bear the punishment due to its . . . disordered condition. (De Principiis, II, x, 5)[1]

The Satanic pride which necessitated God's creation of Hell and its subsequent settlement under restraint is introduced immediately after Milton's first invocation expressing his intent to speak "Of Man's First Disobedience" (I, 1). Even should a defence be mounted in the devil's behalf, favouring what is often perceived as his tragically heroic character, the reader is here, at the outset, made aware of his damning hubris, for Lucifer's pride

> Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
> Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
> To set himself in glory above his peers,
> He trusted to have equalled the Most High.
> (I, 37-40)

Arguments against Satan's essential wickedness, which generally note his unselfish tears for his troops in line 620, cannot obviate the flaw in a character who freely chooses evil. As this spoiled archangel's character develops, it becomes evident that his aspiration is unalterably "To set himself in glory above his peers," for his angelic allies in Heaven, although his subordinates in the divine hierarchy, not only remain so in Hell, but take on to some extent the quality of dupes to his megalomaniacal strategies there as well. Thus Milton speaks of "The fellows of his crime, followers rather" (I, 606). Satan's scheming flattery, intended in virtually every interchange with his minions to beguile them into doing his will, strongly call to mind the Augustinian truism about not telling a book by looking at its cover, where "wisdom and folly," the theologian says, "can be clothed alike in plain words or the finest flowers of speech."[2]

Now, the punishment for such double-dealing, be it toward one's subordinates or the Creator, is a place in the eternal fire. Lest the

reader's mind be saturated with Milton's frequent references to this effect and the import of such a judgement be lost, I quote the grisly results as vividly described by James Joyce:

> O, how terrible is the lot of those wretched beings! The blood seethes and boils in the veins, the brains are boiling in the skull, the heart in the breast glowing and bursting, the bowels a redhot mass of burning pulp, the tender eyes flaming like molten balls.[3]

C. A. Patrides makes the case for a two-fold punishment in Hell, of which such agonizing pain is only the lesser half:

> For as John Donne correctly reminded his audience at Whitehall in 1620, there are in fact "two sorts of torments in hell, Pœna damni and Pœna sensus--the Pain of Loss no less than the Pain of Sense--and these were jointly, not severally, expounded by numerous great theologians, notably St. John Chrysostom in the East, and St. Gregory the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas in the West.[4]

Noting that the Protestant extension of the traditional "two sorts of torments in Hell" is especially evident in Marlowe's and Milton's poetry, the critic remarks that

> When Marlowe's Faustus, we recall, demands to know how Mephistophilis could absent himself from Hell, the latter replies: "Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it" [Doctor Faustus, I, iii, 78] . . . This is not to say that Marlowe had shifted the balance entirely in favor of Hell as a state of mind. Later in the play, Mephistophilis explicitly states that Hell is located "Within the bowels of these elements" [ibid., II, i, 120], while in the last scene a devil bids Faustus look into the "jawes of hell . . . ." Milton, being aware of the traditional views, made it quite clear that he regarded Hell both as a condition and as a place . . . At the same time, however, [he] shared Donne's opinion that "the intensenesse of that fire . . . is no comparable, no considerable part of the torment, in respect of the privation of the sight of God, the banishment from the presence of God.[5]

Here Patrides cites Donne's gloss of Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," which adds "but to fall

out of the hands of the living God, is a horror beyond our expression . . . ."[6]

These notes on the pœna damni introduce a fundamental aspect of Milton's interpretation of eternal punishment--justice not so much by the pains of hellfire as by the deprivation of the joys of Heaven. This is widely considered the worse element of punishment, a reflection of the development in Renaissance thinking away from the medieval conception of a strictly punitive Hell and towards the psychological idea. Patrides cites Sir John Stradling's succinct summation of the seventeenth-century viewpoint Milton held:

> A two-fold punishment augments their anguish,
> The sense of hellish paines, is but the least:
> Losse of heaun's ioyes constraines them fret and languish,
> Hereby their torments chiefly are encreas't.[7]

Marlowe's Mephistophilis, too, evokes the damnation of lost Heaven, when he asks Faustus,

> Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God
> And tasted the eternal joys of Heaven,
> Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
> In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
> (Dr. Faustus, I, iii, 79-82)

Apropos this attitude as manifest in the devils of Paradise Lost, Patrides concludes that "Milton's Hell might well be described as the state wherein the fallen angels constantly lament their everlasting loss of Heaven."[8] Speaking of Satan in particular, he notes that

> Light indeed deepens his heartfelt sense of loss, "wakes the bitter memorie/ Of what he was" (IV, 24-ff.)--and yet, divided as he is against himself, he is irresistibly drawn by light even while he expresses his utter hatred for the sun's overwhelming brilliance (IV, 37). The alienation from God has resulted, clearly, in schizophrenia.[9]

Merritt Hughes, in the introduction to his first annotated edition of Milton's epic, makes several telling points about the devils, on the basis of his belief that "The essence of Milton's conception of the angels was the idea . . . that only the pure in heart see God." He says:

> Several times he refers to the rebel angels as having lost what Dante called . . . the beatific vision. Hence their ignorance and their presumptuous doubts about their own nature, and hence also their speculation in hell about the freedom of their own wills, and their surmise that the will of God is not free, but subject to Fate. (Paradise Lost, xxviii-xxix)

Broadbent thinks the negative, exilic sentence of condemnation to Hell is clear from the start, saying:

> Having flung Satan into "Adamantine Chains and penal Fire," Milton remarks
>
> > But his doom
> > Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
> > Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
> > Torments him (53).[10]

The scenario for this two-fold pain is, of course, Satan's dawning consciousness on the burning lake that marks the commencement of the in medias res beginning. The entire "fiery lake" episode has strong classical overtones. These encompass the characteristics of three of the five rivers in Hades. The parallel with Phlegethon, the river of fire (but in Dante's netherworld the river of boiling blood), is clear, as enumerated thus:

i) At I, 180-84, Satan proposes to his lieutenant Beelzebub, who lay "weltering by his side" (I, 78), that they seek the more solid plain he sees, departing "From off the tossing of these fiery waves."

ii) At I, 221-24, Satan arises:

> Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool
> His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames,
> Driven backward, slope their pointing spires,
> and, rolled
> In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid Vale.

Here, and in the precedent mention of "The fiery surge that from the precipice of Heaven received us falling" (I, 173-74), the words "pool," "billows," and "surge" signify liquid fire, depicting pooling, billowing, and surging combustion. Particularly evocative of a substance with both gaseous and liquid qualities, but especially the lightness of the former, are lines 222-24. A downdraft on a distributed, evenly burning flame (such as that of a natural gas stove) ripples, scatters, and piles up fire just as does a disturbance in liquid.

iii) Especially apposite is the straightforward reference to "liquid fire" when Milton compares Satan's landfall to his first resting place in Hell:

> on dry land
> He lights, if it were land that ever burned
> With solid, as the lake with liquid fire.
> (I, 227-29)

iv) Beelzebub denominates that resting place as a "lake of fire" on which the rest of the rebels lie "grovelling and prostrate" (I, 280).

v) The strongest images of Hell's liquid fires occur in the great epic simile based in part upon the book of Exodus, in part upon the poet's memories of his Italian visit in 1638-39. Here Satan's stunned followers are compared with "autumnal leaves that strow the brooks," with "scatter'd sedge afloat," and with the "floating Carcasses" of Pharaoh's Egyptian soldiery, perished in the Red Sea in futile pursuit of the escaping Hebrews:[11]

> so thick bestrown
> Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,
> Under amazement of thir hideous change.
> (I, 311-13)

Thus in one episode Milton describes for us waves in a pool made of flames that roll in billows, a "surge" or fiery lake on which he sees the apostates like confusedly floating objects. The same horribly majestic simile is preceded by the image of the dark archangel about to call his

host from "the Beach/ Of that inflamed Sea" (I, 299-300).

Secondly, the burning lake, arresting factor in the demons' tumultuous fall, is like Lethe, classical Hades' river of forgetfulness. Chief evidence of this is the reference at line 266 to "th' oblivious Pool," though most indicators of the condition of those laid low on the lake reflect their astonishment rather than the oblivion and forgetfulness of former states caused by drinking Lethe's water. Yet this sense of their helpless surprise and bewilderment exists beside the further characterization of beings disheartened and hopeless, "Abject and lost . . ./ Under amazement of their hideous change."

The third classical river cognate with the fiery lake is the river Styx, by which the Greek gods sealed their oaths. The "Stygian" aspect of the burning lake may be understood in two ways. Styx was the river which flowed around Hades nine times, across which the ferryman Charon transported the dead. It is Lethe, however, which seems to surround, or at least subdivide, Milton's Hell. The probable reason for using the term "stygian" is as a synonym for "murky, gloomy." For the devils laid low on the boiling pool, however, either of the remaining infernal streams is a possible parallel. Cocytus is the river of wailing, and Acheron is the river of woe. Both of these are aspects of the rebels' fate.

The "oblivious Pool," however, may have had something to do with the hiatus between the rebels' arrival in infernal regions and their consciousness of their surroundings, for Milton says of Satan: "Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night/ To mortal men, he with his horrid crew,/ Lay vanquisht, rolling in the fiery Gulf" (I, 50-52). Perhaps these nine days awelter, after falling "such a pernicious highth"

(I, 282) indicate the kind of shock the reader would suffer if peremptorily moved from one environment to another, a sort of angelic jet-lag. Also important in this context is the notion of culture shock, for these travellers were not only unwillingly moved, but also from hospitable to inhospitable accommodation. Harried in the fall, without opportunity to take adaptive measures, they were summarily displaced to where all future action was "not like those steps/ On Heaven's Azure" (I, 296-97), but conducted in an atmosphere of sulphur eternally alight at all points of contact.

Furthermore, there is nothing in Paradise Lost to gainsay the possibility that the "hideous ruin and combustion" (I, 46) of God's unending wrath burning after the apostates decreased to its latent capacity only by degrees, once its work of inexorable transportation was done. Elsewhere I state that the rebels' arrival in the local Hell is most easily imagined as simultaneous with its ignition. The "wasteful Deep" of Chaos is one order of confusion, "but far worse/ Urg'd them behind" (VI, 863-64), we learn. The nine days the demons spent regaining what measure of their powers they could while languishing in liquid fire may also signify the withdrawal by stages of the fiercer and more disorienting divine transportative wrath. Mutually recovered enough to converse about their awful new state, Satan notes to Beelzebub how the worst of God's rage has blown over. The drama then begins, set under the illumination, if so it may be called, of black light, the "darkness visible" (I, 63) which is the great paradox of Milton's sensory Hell.

The credibility gap in the normal reader's mind with regard to the idea of visible darkness as the essential visual characteristic of Hell arises from his experience of combustion as productive of light.

Humans are creatures dependent upon light, penumbral beneath our sheltering atmosphere, but Hell is what Milton archetypically deems it in Paradise Lost, the deeper umbral dark. To Chaos goes the "middle darkness": to Hell's angels, "utter" shade (III, 16). Human eyes are capable of absorbing a limited amount of light, however, and we may conceive of angelic visual perception, even that exiled from the source of divine radiance, as greater than man's. The logical extension of human sight is into the infra-red and ultraviolet areas of the spectrum, and such an extension, based on the possibilities of modern physics, does no violence to the visual concepts in Milton's epic. Beings with such a visual range would conceivably make of "this Prison ordained/ In utter darkness" (I, 71-72) discernible scenes.

This permits explanation of all the visual sort of perception within "the gloomy Deep" (I, 152), and especially aids our conception of threatening Death "that shadow seemed" at Hell's gate. Death is positioned just within the realm of visible darkness where "black it stood as Night" (II, 670), conveying the image of an animate field composed of a still greater absence of light, a sort of sentient Black Hole amidst the preternatural murk.

Such considerations make of visibility in Milton's Hell a matter of degree. The fiery lake's verge, the "seat of desolation," Satan says, is "void of light,/ Save what the glimmering of these livid flames/ Casts pale and dreadful" (I, 181-83). Here, as elsewhere in the episodes on Hell, qualifiers like "livid" and "pale" describe conditions of illumination. Now, what is livid is of a leaden bluish cast. Furthermore, the several references to burning sulphur indicate a bluish fire, though in terms of hue against these must be balanced the volcanic

figure describing Satan's removal to land. The classical simile representing this hellish landfall records that it

> appear'd in hue, as when the force
> Of subterranean wind transports a Hill
> Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
> Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible
> And fuell'd entrails thence conceiving Fire,
> Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds
> (I, 230-35)

Such is a picture of red-orange fire. Another such is the reference to the lakeshore of "burning marle" (I, 296), a clay-lime soil alight. Sulphurous burning and lividity do indicate blue flames, however, and as nowhere in the poem is this coloration contradicted, it is safe to say that the common impression of a red-orange Hell, if here only darkly visible, misses part of Milton's picture. The image of red-hot combustion, usually drawn from medieval texts and representations, should not be blithely read into Paradise Lost.

There is considerable precedent for a Hell of visible darkness, and Milton's sources may have been manifold. Interested readers should consult John M. Steadman's article "Milton and Patristic Tradition: The Quality of Hell-Fire," which provides the definitive source-material for a gloomy Hell, specifically for the concept of "darkness visible."[12] Steadman points out that:

> The idea that Hell-fire sheds no light was familiar to at least four seventeenth-century writers besides Milton . . . [for] Herrick's Noble Numbers, Collop's Catholicon Medici, Donne's Ecclogue, and Walker's History of Independency all allude to this belief . . . . [and] any careful reader of . . . even Chaucer's Persones Tale would have known it. Its usefulness for Milton was enhanced by its traditional nature.[13]

He further notes that at the end of the fifth century St. John Chrysostom, in his Paraenesis sive Adhortatio ad Theodorum Lapsum, proclaimed

Hell-fire different from other flames "inasmuch as it was inextinguishable and also burned without light."[14] The biblical authority for this and for Gregory's explanation a century later that the punishment of the damned is "burning without and blindness within" is Job 10:22, where the despondent Job invokes Sheol, the Old Testamental place of departed souls, "the land of gloom and chaos, where light is as darkness."

In discussing the possible cosmogony of Milton's universe, Chambers notes that seventeenth-century French philosopher Pierre Gassendi remarked upon an ancient who

> thought that God first produced a three-dimensional space within himself; God is thus infinite, but space is bounded by God. God, who is incorporeal light, then shone his light through space and thereby brought into being a corporeal light identical to fire, whence comes the heat necessary to sustain life.[15]

The pertinence of the notion of God as "incorporeal light," distinct from what quantum physicists perceive today as discrete particles or waves making up "corporeal light identical to fire," is its application to the conundrum of visible darkness, the sensible ethos of isolated Hell. On the mentioned model God, whose essence is light, encloses Hell, which is nevertheless totally distant from Him among all that is enclosed. In this isolation it might be said to painfully subsist in God's incorporeal light, being set off from the joys of corporeal illumination.

What follows upon the introduction of Milton's conundrum is also a matter of biblical authority. At Satan's first glimpse around his horrific new residence, "darkness visible/ Serv'd only to discover sights of woe" (I, 63-64). Professor John A. Himes translates from Gregory's Moralium as follows:

> Though there the fire gives no light for comfort, yet that it may torment the more, it does give light for a purpose. For the damned shall see by the flame lighting them all their followers along with themselves in torment for the love of whom they transgressed, that . . . the destruction of those very persons may also afflict them for the increase of their own condemnation. (Moralium [a commentary on Job], IX, 66)[16]

In support of Milton's concept, Steadman also cites St. Bonaventura, in his commentary on the Sentences. Among other evidence Bonaventura marshalled is Job 18:5, "Yea, the light of the wicked is put out, and the flame of his fire does not shine."[17] Steadman says:

> Various texts were cited in support of this conception of Hell-fire. Basil believed that [Psalm 29:7 in the Authorized Version], "The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire," authorized this opinion. God's separation of day and night on the fourth day (Genesis 1:14) was comparable to his division of the dual properties of flame . . . . [while] the same distinction between the caustic and illuminative powers of fire explained how God could illumine Israel and also purify her by burning away her sins (Isaiah 10:17).[18]

"For the fathers as well as the schoolmen," he continues,

> the darkness of Hell-fire represented a deliberate act of divine justice for the purpose of intensifying the torments of the damned by depriving them of the possible consolation of light.[19]

It is ironic that in Hell the least gleam of artificial light can only be produced along with the heavy, cloying odour of "Naphtha and Asphaltus" (I, 729), though Milton evokes their dulling scent only indirectly.

Steadman refers at length to St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica (ca. 1270) as a possible scholastic source of Milton's hellish gloom. Thomas too used Basil's and Gregory's texts, concluding that

> The disposition of Hell will be such as to be adapted to the utmost unhappiness of the damned . . . . [for] in hell the place must be so disposed for seeing as regards light and darkness, that nothing be seen clearly, and that only such things be dimly seen as are able to bring anguish to the heart.[20]

The opposite viewpoint on the nature of "darkness visible" is taken by Robert Edgeworth, who claims that taking the phrase as an hyperbole meaning no more than that the light was rather dim is incorrect. He admits that such an understanding accords with the nature of fire as we know it and with the otherwise umbral place most remote from the illumination of God, but posits that we ought to "accept the idea that there can be flames which give no light . . . made possible in Hell by divine suspension of the natural order for punitive purposes."[21] Such flames Edgeworth calls "absolute blackness," suggesting that

> Milton meant what he said: the flames of Hell radiate a positive, palpable darkness which extinguishes light (symbol of the divine in Milton as in the Christian tradition generally: God is absent from Hell) wherever it reaches--a powerful negation of light, and not merely a light which is weak or fitful.[22]

But the "utter darkness" of I, 72 may mean no more than the absence of light visible to human readers. I would argue first that the devils fell for nine days in divine rage of fiery and violent but otherwise unspecified character which ravaged their appearance extraordinarily. Could not, then, what we physical beings think of as an internal function, i.e., vision, have been equally altered? What presumption must it be on our part to assume that the change God wrought in the rebels must be an evident weakening or blindness rather than some more subtle mutation, when we can fully comprehend neither God's disfiguring wrath nor the angelic state in the first place? Truly, as Raphael told Adam, "Intelligential substances require/ As doth your Rational" (V, 408-09), but even the archangel assigned to transmit God's messages to man can only speculate about the relation of the mortal to the immortal, while acknowledging the need to find a human terminology:

> and what surmounts the reach
> Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
> By lik'ning spiritual to corporal forms,
> As may express them best, though what if Earth
> Be but the shadow of Heav'n, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
> (V, 571-76)

Surely by presenting us with the Platonist demigod Raphael, Milton advises us not to ponder too deeply on things divine, as his philosophizing devils vainly attempt to do in Hell (II, 557-65).

Rather than deal in Edgeworth's somewhat complex "divine suspension of the natural order for punitive purposes," why should we not view the visual capabilities of the devils as a simple extension of the human, as Milton suggests the heavenly sense is? Man is made in God's image, yet is "a little lower than the angels," therefore as good an analogue of angelic sight as any is that easy extension of the human encompassed by infra-red and ultraviolet vision.[23] It might even be seen to add some weight to the traditional medieval image of red-eyed devils, a convention heretofore based on the presence of internal fire.

No study of the hellish episodes in Paradise Lost would be complete without some mention of the poet's magnificent use of epic similes. The poem is extended by many such, the most famous being that depicting the reprobate spirits lying crushed on the fiery lake, "Thick as autumn leaves that strow the brooks/ In Vallombrosa" (I, 302-03). This noted image, so linked to seasonal observation, is not uncommon in pre-Miltonic writing. The poet may have been inspired in particular by Dante's simile for the embarkation of lost souls across Acheron in the inferno:

> And as the late leaves of November fall
> One after one till on the earthen floor
> The ruined bough looks on their funeral,
> So by that river Adam's seed impure
> Cast themselves from the wharf, one after one,
> At signals, as the bird goes to the lure.
> (Inferno, III, 112-17)

Epic similes suggest the conditions of Milton's Hell beyond more outright delineation. For example, another compares the response of the demonic army to Satan's call with the locust cloud Moses summoned to afflict the oppressive Egyptians, a cloud "That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung/ Like Night, and darken'd all the land of Nile" (I, 342-43).[24] Broadbent comments on this thus:

> This simile is concerned less with their number than their movement--a heaving, shifting flying in close formation--and their character: the devils are locusts, utter enemies to man, horrifyingly and insensately destructive . . . .[25]

Pursuing a theme of his article, he rightly notes of this horrifying flight of the aroused legions like "a pitchy cloud/ Of locusts, warping in the Eastern Wind" (I, 340-41) that "The darkness motif continues: the devils not only live in the dark, they make it as well."[26]

Here the reader may be puzzled as to what could further darken "darkness visible." Relative illumination is all the answer. Only those who unrepentantly proclaim the tenet "ever to do ill our sole delight" (I, 160), a soiled and debased angel horde such as Milton archetypically portrays, could so deepen darkness. Dante sees damned spirits as themselves shadows when he says, "I saw come with sound of wailing by/ The shadows fluttering in the tempest's brawl" (Inferno, V, 48-49). In accord with this is Milton's development of the waning angelic powers of the fallen angels, a progression not, however, tending explicitly toward

the Dantesque conception of reprobate insubstantiality. Milton's fallen, except for their heavenly virtues, become sensibly over-vivid rather than faded. Nevertheless, the suggestion of the wraith-like exists in the very attrition of angelic virtue in Lucifer's fall.

What happens to the fallen angels after their deposition in Hell is a continued ebbing of goodness in their natures. It is both an inanition or emptying from lack of nourishment, and a psychological disembowelment. Especially, it is a gradual wearing away of remaining grace by the just punishments of inner perversity and harsh outer circumstance. Ernest Schanzer rightly contends that these last two constitute the primary hellish state, and that the inner state stokes the outer, and vice versa, whether the infernal denizen will or no.[27] Schanzer says of this hopeless dynamism:

> It is not by accident that we find so much strenuous reasoning and arguing among Satan's followers . . . . In its uncorrupted state the peculiar quality of the angelic intellect is its power of intuitive apprehension of the truth . . . . In the course of their fall, Satan and his followers lose their power of intuitive apprehension and have to resort to discursive reasoning . . . . Thus the mental state of Hell, best exemplified by Satan, entails ceaseless cerebration coupled with an ever increasing feebleness of the understanding and complicated by an unwillingness to face unpalatable facts.[28]

Related to all the effects listed above is the altering process of the fall from Heaven. The "Nine days they fell" (VI, 871) between the divine and the base states, if viewed as the initial stage in the sapping of the rebels' angelic qualities, lend themselves numerically to the notion of decimation, in which the successive phases of their descent through the maelstrom constitute a gradual, even enervation of innate heavenly glory. Upon their arrival in Hell they would then be possessors of but one-tenth of their angelic attributes, in spite of their subsequent

bluster about "immortal vigour" and "immortal beings." Whether or not Milton intended such a systematic vitiation in his description of their fall, the devils arrive irresistibly in Hell, contaminated and invalid as angels, in perpetuity.

Once they are in Hell, and in the retrospectives of the events that led to that exile, the angels-become-devils are the entire antagonistic element in the plot of Paradise Lost. Although Milton's intent is to be "doctrinal to a [human] nation," it is to be achieved through theodicial means, and while Adam and Eve may be deemed the tragic hero and heroine of the tale, the quintessential contest is one of supernatural warfare. Accordingly, the Hell Milton gives us can be defined solely by looking at its inhabitants. It is indeed the place "Eternal Justice had prepared/ For those rebellious" (I, 70-71), and as such it may be defined in the simple sensible terms pertaining to those failed rebels. As Raphael tells Adam, the "pure Intelligential substances" that are (or were) angels "contain/ Within them every lower faculty/ Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste" (V, 409-11). The devils, malformed as they have made themselves, experience their prison via sensory stimuli. This leads immediately to the conundrum of understanding "darkness visible," which I have dealt with first becuase it intrigues so many readers, casual and critical alike. Proceeding, the reader may ask, "What is sound in Milton's Hell?"

Unspirited local Hell is best imagined as normally dark due to its isolation from the source of light, and to its walled or roofed character implied by the presence in it of the single exit-entryway, Hell's "gate." After God's wrath has "laid the fiery Surge," igniting Hell and delivering into it the spiritual damned, it remains dark yet

possesses an arcane visibility. No such change occurs relative to sound there, for Hell before occupancy is silent, and what sound exists after occupancy is strictly devil-made. There is no mention of natural aural input in Milton's Hell at all, no drip of the sad interminable rain which would seem requisite to an icy land that "gathers heap," no crackle of the constant and virtually ubiquitous flame. But shortly after debased angeldom comes to Hell, when the chief leaders have been named and the multitude have been invoked, Satan "straight commands that at the warlike sound/ Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be uprear'd/ His mighty Standard" (I, 531-33). Prior to this, awed or defiant devilish conversation is the only sound Milton brings to our awareness in Hell.

The devilish emblem is uplifted amidst

> all the while
> Sonorous metal blowing Martial sounds:
> At which the universal Host upsent
> A shout that tore Hell's Concave, and beyond
> Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
> (I, 539-43)

This familiar flag, now raised against goodness, works upon the shattered morale of those who of old followed it in Heaven. The residue of grace which touches their innate sense of organization awakes their response to the brazen summons to martial order, and "Anon they move/ In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood/ Of Flutes and soft Recorders" (I, 549-51). More, the devilish soldiery, reinspired by Satan's call to arms, the parade of their leaders, and the unfurling of the once archangelic standard,

> Deliberate valor breathed, firm and unmoved
> With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,
> Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
> With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase

> Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
> From mortal or immortal minds. (I, 554-59)[29]

The martial display continues, as

> Thus they
> Breathing united force with fixed thought
> Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd
> Thir painful steps o'er the burnt soil
> (I, 559-62)

The devils, then, engage in loud defiance and mitigating military music to assuage the curse of unliving silence and endless pain. Another example of their insurgence occurs with the conclusion of Satan's first address to the regathered forces. With the impassioned advice that "War then, War/ Open or understood, must be resolv'd" (I, 661-62),

> He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew
> Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
> Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
> Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd
> Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped Arms
> Clash'd on thir sounding shields the din of war,
> Hurling defiance toward the Vault of Heav'n.
> (I, 663-69)

The regrouped legions respond to their leader's undamped enthusiasm for war with military clamour, a type of Hell in every society. But apart from this fervour and confidence in their cause there is implicit here the devils' topsy-turvy resolve to "make a Heav'n of Hell" by denying its lifeless silence with boisterous noisemaking.

Another example of collective sound, sound exclusive to the devils and their works in an otherwise static and silent Hell, is the responsive hum of the peers gathered in dark design in Pandemonium after Mammon's counsel of internal construction and slow adaptation:

> He scarce had finisht, when such murmur fill'd
> Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain
> The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
> Had rous'd the Sea (II, 284-87)

Then, when the Satanic lords have consulted, the waiting helots have heard the decree, and "the ranged powers/ Disband, and wandring, each his several way/ Pursues" (II, 522-24) some

> sing
> With notes Angelical to many a Harp
> Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall
> By doom of Battle (II, 547-50)

of which Milton records that

> Thir song was partial, but the harmony
> (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
> Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
> The thronging audience. (II, 552-55)

Of their prince's forthcoming endeavour news has been given when "Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim/ Put to their mouths the sounding Alchymy/ By Herald's voice explain'd" (II, 516-18). Thus we hear from the devils, apart from various martial shouts, the notes of herald's trumpets, military flautists and pipers, and the accompaniment of harps to purely self-centred minstrelsy.

The fervent, fearful, and malicious speeches and conversations signalling Milton's in medias res commencement plunge the reader of Paradise Lost so completely into play that a metaphysical question such as what the scene of these devilish dialogues was like before its participants arrived is unlikely to be asked. When the Satanic peers are at one, "Then of thir Session ended they bid cry/ With Trumpet's regal sound the great result" (II, 514-15). The horns signal some resolution of the devils' immediate problem, that is, what is to be done to alter

their plight, and with the subsequent retirement of some to harp and song, to contest and reconnaisance, the onus of intensity shifts from plotting players to wasted scene, the same bleak landscape that lay silent and dead before their advent.

Here the hellish games begin. But while some conduct futile but orderly tournaments and contests, "Others with vast Typhœan rage more fell/ Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air/ In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar" (II, 539-41). Griffin points out that "Their 'wild uproar' resembles the 'uproar' in heaven (VI, 663) when 'seated hills' with 'Rocks, water, woods' are uplifted and flung in battle (VI, 664-67)."[30] Here is material Hell itself finally sounding, as the devils disrupt it.

Schanzer deals especially with the cacophonous nature of sound in Hell. He writes of how

> The . . . perverted order in Hell is also manifest to the ear . . . . [for] there is harsh, jarring, and tumultuous noise in Hell, which reflects the discord in the macrocosm and microcosm.[31]

In particular, he compares Milton's description of the opening of Hell's gates with the corresponding description of Heaven's (II, 879-83, VII, 205-07). "In each case," he notes, "the music made by the opening of the gates reflects the music that reigns within . . . ."[32] In addition, he says,

> But not only is there discordant noise in Hell, reflecting the chaos that is raging . . . there is also harmonious music in Hell because perverted order has been established there in the body politic. And because so much in the Satanic empire is an imitation of its celestial equivalents the music heard in Hell is also a close reproduction of the heavenly music.[33]

Noting the replication in Pandemonium of some heavenly abode, "being

designed by the same architect, Mulciber," Schanzer concludes that "Where there is celestial architecture there will also be celestial music," a fact attested to when the hellish city "Rose like an exhalation, with the sound/ Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet" (I, 711-12). The existence of either sort of harmony in Hell is attributable to the devils' retention of a portion of their former state, but as the critic notes,

> It is indicative of the Satanic position that, whereas the angels in Heaven sing of God's glory and of the exploits of the Son, of the beauty of Heaven and the Universe, the fallen angels sing only about themselves.[34]

Though until the psychological interpretation of Hell gained credence in the Renaissance much was made of the perversion of the sense of taste in Hell, Milton treats of it only indirectly except for the ash-eating incident in Book X, which by no means describes a constant condition. Apart from the gagging effect of breathing sulphur fumes, the medieval idea of choking on and masticating foulness as a condition of Hell has no explicit place in the epic.

Nonetheless, all that befalls the rebellious angels in Hell is foretold by the Son in the following terms, as he prepares for the heavenly battle in which he will "rid heav'n of these rebell'd/ To thir prepar'd ill Mansion driven down/ To chains of darkness, and th' undying Worm" (VI, 737-39). Here "chains" is apt corollary to "rebell'd," but "ill Mansion" goes with "th' undying Worm," each with its connotations of disease. But all disease in Milton's Hell is psychological, for where nothing grows, nothing rots. No light man knows exists there, no natural sound at all, and the references to tactile, scentable, or tastable putrefaction are all only implications. Milton's local damnation is a wasteland, but not evidently rotten. His theodicial purpose warranted an

emphasis on the diseased soul or psychological Hell rather than a visceral reiteration of medieval conceptions of foulness. Modern writers, however, use such reiterations for shock value. An effort such as Joyce's, for example, does reveal the lack of a distinct character of entropy in Milton's Hell. Joyce's Father Arnall warns his charges, in the Portrait sermon:

> Every sense of the flesh is tortured and every faculty of the soul therewith: the eyes with impenetrable utter darkness, the nose with noisome odours, the ears with yells and howls and execrations, the taste with foul matter, leprous corruption, nameless suffocating filth, the touch with red-hot goads and spikes, with cruel tongues of flame.[35]

In Milton's hot and painful Hell "noisome odours" are present only to the reader who associates burning sulphur with its characteristic stink, as well as with its hot and virtually unquenchable flame. Yells and howls and execrations are present in the devils' violent games and their martial clamour, but the tasted foul matter, leprous corruption, and suffocating filth are only half represented in the fruit of the phantom grove. Its fruit was ashen, and though as food it would be foul and suffocating, ash is clean.

It is here, however, that the strength of Milton's implied hellishness of taste and touch, and even of scent, may be brought forth. When Hell's angels turn viperous (X, 547 ff.) and a "grove hard by/ Sprung up with this their change," they raven after the delusive fruit of this small wood, grown miraculously out of the "burning marle." Tasting brings them only "bitter ashes" to chew, their mouths "With soot and cinders filled" (X, 566, 570). The orchard is an illusion created by an avenging God. Its fruit is no more than the harsh dust of the local Hell marvelously camouflaged. Its appearance on the plain of Hell jibes

perfectly with the compound of "combustible and fuell'd entrails" in the epic simile defining hellish ground (I, 230-37), which leaves as residue "a singed bottom all involv'd/ With stench and smoke." The reptilian devils' meal was one of powdered scoriae, fittingly consumed on a ground of slag and clinkers. Tantalus, confined and hungry forever in the lowest Greek hell of Tartarus, might count himself lucky at the prospect. To the devils, once partakers of the ambrosial nectars of Heaven, its foulness was exacerbated.

But why the lack of rot that would make a place of absolute sensory as well as mental punishment more understandable to us? Why no direct reference to the squalid decay which when associated with intelligent beings is a sensory indication of inherent evil? It may be that the poet conceived of the angelic nature, even when debased and resident in the pit, as immutable, a nature to be scored and bent but not composted. Certainly this would seem to be his intent when the paucity of allusions to peculiarly demonic smells is considered, and when eventual human corruption signals that a more odorous decay is afoot. When Adam and Eve eat of the forbidden tree it wreaks a change in odious Death, for

> with delight he snuff'd the smell
> Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock
> Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,
> Against the day of Battle, to a Field,
> Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur'd
> With scent of living Carcasses design'd
> For death, the following day, in bloody fight.
> So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd
> His Nostril wide into the murky Air,
> Sagacious of his Quarry from so far.
> (X, 272-81)

Thus in Paradise Lost human and devilish putrefaction seem to be mutually exclusive, although the scope of the poem does not extend to the sharing

of Hell by both sorts of beings. Paradoxically, in this damnation where rot is not, everything is being continually consumed by fire, an image of purification. But the real stagnation is all the time occurring in the inhabitants' minds.

Milton's sparse references to hellish odours are in contra-distinction to the "ambrosial Night" and celebratory "incense Clouds/ Fuming from Golden Censers" in Heaven (V, 642; VII, 599-600). But the chief evidence of even heavenly scent in the poem is allusive, centering on the presence of "Elysian Flow'rs," which have a hellish counterpart in Pandemonium, under the artificial light of the fume-producing lamps and cressets "fed/ With Naphtha and Asphaltus" (I, 727-29). Now, "asphaltus" is a petroleum pitch; naphtha is a coal shale or petroleum oil, and the nitre of Hell mentioned elsewhere (potassium nitrate or saltpetre) is a constituent of gunpowder, as is the blue-burning noxious sulphur. All burn freely, and three of the four do so with unpleasantly pungent effects. Regarding scent in Hell, then, a sense only implied by the mention of the commodites themselves, and not their acrid or tarry odours, it may be helpful to contrast such hints with what Satan encounters during his final advance towards Paradise, when

> of pure now purer air
> Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
> Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
> All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
> Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense
> Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
> Those balmy spoils. (IV, 153-59)

Milton invokes instead detestable odours when God alters the world after the humans' fall, creating on its surfaces "Exhalations hot,/ Corrupt and Pestilent" (X, 694-95).

In his poem "The Holy Fair" (1786), Robbie Burns speaks of Hell as

> A vast, unbottomed, boundless pit,
> Fill'd fou o' lowin'° brunstane, °flaming
> Wha's ragin' flame, and scorchin' heat,
> Wad melt the hardest whunstane!°[36] °mill-stone

In his dialectal way Burns hits upon one of the quantitative imponderables of Hell as Milton portrayed it, that is, the humanly unbearable heat of "ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd." It is the primary tactile sense of eternal torment. Burns's perception of such heat builds especially the image of a volcanic place where rock, as in the entrails of Milton's ore-bearing hill on the plain, becomes magma, just as the blood boils in the veins of the damned.

But elementally opposite to this, it is particularly notable that excepting the references to water held in solid captivity on the "frozen Continent" and the epic simile about leaf-strewn brooks and sedge-strewn seas, Milton deals not at all in watery images. The "liquid" of Hell's lake is burning, the land around it and on the adjacent plain is burning, and the air throughout the dungeon universe is burning. No dampness, as I have said, no dreariness of protracted wet dripping occurs: vales are "dark and dreary" and regions are "dolorous" (II, 618, 619), but the play is always on gradations of darkness and the correspondent gradations of flame, not on any image of oppressive dampness such as brings despair to many a human heart. In a classical sense, the ethos of Milton's Hell is that of Mars, not that of watery Earth or verdant Venus.

The received impression of its netherworld ambience is of a desertified rather than a squalid place, although this wasteland, in which the solid elements are marl and scoriae and ice, is indeed a

"Universe of death," with fewer possibilities than an ashpit. Into this material graveyard are introduced living spirits, and while Milton asks us on the one hand to envision unliving infinites of pain and darkness, he creates an organic sense when he gives us on the other a dying in the inevitable decay of the devils' remaining angelic powers. But these powers, it should be noted, are attitudinal and internal, and their loss marks the ravages of the psychological Hell alone, for the external powers of God's spirits, such as flight, changing size, and shapeshifting, remain intact in Hell. Professor Rajan sees the real role of Milton's indirect treatment of decay:

> The comparison of the angels to a plague of locusts and a barbarian invasion, to fallen leaves, scattered sedge and to trees blasted by lightning creates an awareness of evil both as the scourge of God and as a decaying of life, destined eventually for the death which it inflicts.[37]

And in the end, whether perceived as a place of hot ash or of "leprous corruption," Hell remains the place of punishment "Where all life dies, death lives."

The study of occupied Hell, when it is not dealing with any manifestation of the demonic personality, must deal with the devils' works. These take two forms, the creating of chaos which is a physical display of the madness caused by their plight, and the two great monumental works which their modicum of celestial virtue allows them to construct, Pandemonium and the giant mole to Earth. In regard to the latter, W. R. McClung notes that whatever state of accomplishment the devils retain from sublimer existence, "Infernal as well as celestial architecture in Paradise Lost is elevated several notches above terrestrial standards of opulence."[38] We can say, then, that "Doric

pillars overlaid/ With Golden Architrave," and "Cornice or Frieze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n" where the "Roof was fretted Gold" represent at least the apex of earthly architecture (I, 714-17). Though a very different conception from it, this devilish magnificence is cognate with Dante's "red city of Dis or Lucifer, wherein are punished the more heinous sins."[39] The great Florentine deals, of course, with an advanced stage of hellish inhabitation, when the place has been widely populated by human as well as devilish souls. From the point of view of Milton's epical ethos, the attrition of heavenly virtue in the fallen angels of Inferno is much progressed. The devils have become guards and tormentors, Malebranche that are as hideously deformed in body as mind. Their city, once perhaps as aesthetically pleasing as Pandemonium, has the same ugly quality. The evidence of artful construction to ameliorate devilish suffering has disappeared in accord with the general decay of the builders. Arrived with Virgil in the moat surrounding Dis, Dante reports "Of iron seemed the walls above my head" (Cto. VII, 78). It may be protested that this is inconclusive regarding Dis's horrible aspect, as Pandemonium too was made from ore and presumably had walls of a metallic appearance. Milton tells us outright that the roof was ornately crafted of gold. I direct the reader to Dante's first sight of Hell's city, as he and Virgil speak of it:

> "Already," I said, "mine eye distinguishes
> Clearly its minarets within the vale,
> All red, as if they had come from furnaces."
> And he to me: "This their exterior shell
> The eternal fire within them maketh red,
> Even as thou seest, in this low hollow of Hell."
> (Inferno, Cto. VIII, 70-75)

Within the walls, the travellers find no "Starry Lamps" yielding light

"as from a sky," no "smooth/ And level pavement" or "golden seats" (I, 725-30, 796), but "a plain covered with sepulchres, the lids of which are open and which are full of flames."[40] Due to his intention to inform that the endeavours of angels of any sort make man's efforts look small, Milton's Pandemonium is more attractive. Rajan says "Pandemonium may be a mockery of creation but it is a mockery which surpasses Babylon and Alcairo."[41] Yet the discerning reader may conclude of these comparisons, with Broadbent, who calls them "oriental similes," that "their form is 'Babylon, etc., less magnificent than Pandemonium'; but their effect is to make it a primitive, over-decorated, vulgar palace, the home of cruel and heathen despotism."[42]

Whether the reader chooses to see the grandeur or the vulgarity of the city beside Hell's lake, it may be noted that the location, magnitude, and details of the finished Pandemonium have been cogently related to Rome's St. Peter's, which Milton visited in the autumn of 1638. Rebecca Smith, in her detailed essay "The Source of Milton's Pandemonium" (1931), discusses the travelogue of John Evelyn, who visited the Vatican in 1644:

> A comparison of Milton's picture with Evelyn's description reveals unmistakable likenesses. The vast size, the situation on a plain near a hill, the temple-like architecture, the pilasters and columns, the dome, the splendid gilt inside and out, the porches and brazen doors, the pendent lights, and the adjacent council chamber for secret conclaves are all precise parallels. But more significant than these specific details is the general impression of "art, vastness, and magnificence" which is common to both pictures . . . .[43]

In testing this theory she draws attention not only to the dramatic action of the scenes in Books I and II, but also to those scenes in Book X dealing with Satan's return to the city after the fall of man.

The argument for a city of Satan based on that node of Roman Catholicism, the basilica of St. Peter, she says, is supported when at the archdemon's homecoming "we are told that Satan went to an 'inland city' with walls, where the legions watched while the 'Grand in council sat'" (X, 423, 427-28).[44]

In any case the heavy structure Milton describes in Hell, with its arguably baroque overtones, should also be compared with the shining edifice seen when rebellious angels march all Heaven's night, until

> At length into the limits of the North
> They came, and Satan to his Royal seat
> High on a Hill, far blazing, as a Mount
> Rais'd on a Mount, with Pyramids and Tow'rs
> From Diamond Quarries hewn, and Rocks of Gold
> The Palace of great Lucifer (V, 755-60)[45]

No ponderous, ornate temple this, for every abode in Heaven is designed to house those who praise and worship God alone. This archangelic palace is chateau-like, a shining acropolis "from Diamond Quarries hewn," not an extravagant stupa of volcanic rock and dull ore. Yet Milton gives us in Hell "a Fabric huge . . . Built like a Temple" (I, 710-13), in which the potentate,

> High on a Throne of Royal State, which far
> Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Show'rs on her Kings Barbaric Pearl and Gold,
> Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
> To that bad eminence (II, 1-6)

In comparison with the heavenly building, as these excerpts demonstrate, Pandemonium retains in it the artful and the grandiose, but by way of contrast it can neither aesthetically invigorate nor enchant. On these bases I am forced to agree with Broadbent's assessment that "Pandemonium is a monument to the devils' folly and barbarity," the more so in light

of a view like Dante's, of the hellish city aged in evil like the souls of the potentates that inhabit it.

The comparison Milton makes possible of Satan's metropolis with unsullied Lucifer's palace, however, may raise questions regarding the skill and imagination of the architect. Greek Hephaestus, whom the poet calls Mulciber, was a deformed and lame deity of fire and metalworking. By choosing Lucifer in heart and then in pitched battle in Heaven, he earned only life eternal in the flames, though with an equal chance to practise his trade. Simultaneously he lost what is most important to a builder, the proper materials, for Hell's richest ore yielded only gold, while the gem-quarries of Heaven were absent. A sympathizer with Mulciber (who in his own mythology was sometimes himself a peacemaker) might determine that he excelled at using what was at hand, at least, but while the great devilish ingathering at Pandemonium signalled their most intellectually organized state since the expulsion from Heaven, it also ushered in the first psychological steps in the further decline of the devils' virtues.

This devils' citadel provides a show intended to rival or at least supply solace for the loss of the heavenly firmament now irrevocably distant and obscured by the lesser and the deeper darks. But "town" in Hell is all facade, as Broadbent points out with telling force:

> . . . already in Book I Milton's attitude to Pandemonium is definite: he preaches about it at just the right level of curt and condescending weariness--"Let none admire that riches grow in Hell: that soyle may best Deserve the pretious bane" [I, 690-92] . . . . [and further,] The palace rises like the machinery of a masque--artificial, temporary, illusory. [The word] "Exhalation" . . . suggests that the building is insubstantial, elusive, mystifying, a veil for the ugly discomforts of Hell.[46]

And Dr. Rajan, looking at the surrogate "sky," remarks, "Surely it is no accident that the roof of Pandemonium is made of the same material as the pavement of Heaven."[47] But Broadbent sees it going further:

> Pandemonium rises as the devils would like to rise; it provides artificial light and loftiness in the deep dark pit of Hell . . . [and] The "smooth and level pavement" is a pleasant change from "the burnt soyle" (562); the "ample spaces" help the devils to forget that Hell is a dungeon--these brass doors open as those of Hell do not. This arched roof is not "vaulted with fire" but hung with lamps that imitate the stars Hell lacks.[48]

These are all positive comments, however: none of them looks at the torments that fill all of Hell, both natural and artificial. In his introduction to St. Augustine's City of God, Thomas Merton compares the corrupt earthly city, a polis unestablished in the time-frame of Paradise Lost, and the New Jerusalem:

> The difference between the two cities is the difference between two loves. Those who are united in the City of God are united by the love of God and of one another in God. Those who belong to the other city are indeed not united in any real sense: but it can be said that they have one thing in common besides their opposition to God: each one of them is intent upon the love of himself above all else. In St. Augustine's classical expression: "These two cities were made by two loves: the earthly city by the love of self unto the contempt of God, and the Heavenly city by the love of God unto the contempt of self." (Book 14, Ch. 28) The earthly city glorifies in its own power, the heavenly in the power of God.[49]

Now Milton's Pandemonium is cognate with Augustine's "earthly city" inasmuch as it can be identified, as it was by Bunyan in The Pilgrim's Progress, by its corruption.[50] Bunyan's Vanity Fair is a type of the decadent city, the town owned and run by the devil, whom the contemporary of Milton denominates Beelzebub rather than Satan. And Pandemonium is the prototype of urban decadence.[51] This led to the saint's conclusion that "The love which unites the citizens of the heavenly city is

disinterested love, or charity," whereas the nether city is founded upon selfish love, or cupidity. Indeed, egoistic existence sets the tone not only in the urbs, but in all of occupied Hell.

CHAPTER IV

PSYCHOLOGICAL HELL

In the sermon in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce takes up inner hellishness thus:

> And this terrible fire will not afflict the bodies of the damned only from without but each lost soul will be a hell unto itself, the boundless fire raging in its very vitals . . . . And through the several torments of the senses the immortal soul is tortured eternally in its very essence amid the leagues upon leagues of glowing fires kindled in the abyss . . . .[1]

Though Joyce was giving a rather medieval description of Hell for spectacular effect, the words pointing to a specifically mental anguish are forceful: "the immortal soul is tortured eternally in its very essence." This is the ground and beginning of the psychological Hell.

One of the greatest chroniclers of a personal and mental ordeal was St. Augustine. He states as the object of his confessions his wish to "call to mind my past foulness, and the carnal corruptions of my soul . . . . reviewing my most wicked ways in the very bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayest grow sweet unto me."[2] This is the very reverse of the psychology of hellishness. Like Aristotle in his regard of the drama, Augustine saw in self-evaluation the profound value of catharsis. Such value accrues by association to those who read him seriously, and indeed to the reader of Paradise Lost. Certainly the fulfilment of Milton's wish to "justify the ways of God to men" (I, 26) must be cathartic unless, as Descartes hypothesized, God is evil. The

value of Augustine's Confessions to this study is that, in the ultimate certainty of the saint's faith in "the One God," the autobiographical enumeration of the "multiplicity of things" among which he lost himself while turned away from that divine unity explores the facets of Everyman's psychological Hell.

Because by definition the state of "psychological Hell" encompasses everything that can go wrong in the human (or angelic) psyche, the study of even one man's interpretation of it will be as broad as all personality, for only in God is there nothing corruptible. Therefore, this chapter will be partly taken up with alternative and successive descriptions of the psychological Hell.

In Milton commentary perhaps the definitive description of the inner Hell is Dr. Rajan's. In Milton's Paradise Lost: Books I and II (1969), he observes that

> Hell . . . is a state of mind as well as a place. Its "darkness visible" is moral and spiritual and is in calculated contrast to the "holy light" which in the invocation to Book III, is identified with God and with the force of creation. Similarly, Hell's "silent valley" where "heroic deeds" are sung and its "hill" where philosophy is discussed belong to an inward rather than a physical geography. On the other hand, Satan's declaration of evil as Hell's controlling principle (I, 159-65), is objectified in a physical world "Where all life dies, death lives and Nature breeds/ Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things." The chaos through which Satan journeys is reflected in the "hateful siege/ Of contraries" by which his mind is tormented (IX, 121-22), while his state of mind in turn, finds embodiment in his "outward lustre" and in the "original brightness" which his form is losing. Sin begins in Satan's thoughts and is then exteriorised; Paradise can be external but the "happier" Paradise is restored within man.[3]

An early authority for the acceptability of such a view is Augustine, who claimed that "the allegorists should be encouraged to extract all available values from their interpretations of the true and local

Hell . . . ."[4] Speaking analogously of Paradise, he says:

> This is the kind of thing that can be said by way of allegorical interpretation . . . . [and] there is no prohibition against such exegesis, provided we also believe in the truth of the story as a faithful record of historical fact.[5]

Thus we are admonished to believe exclusively in neither the local, physical Hell nor in the troubling of the psyche, but in both sorts of damnation.

Looking at the development of his notion of psychological Hell, we come first and foremost to Milton's Comus (1634). With deep perception the Elder Brother explains that

> He that has light within his own clear breast
> May sit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day,
> But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
> Benighted walks under the midday Sun;
> Himself is his own dungeon.
> (Complete Poems, 99, ll. 381-85)

These lines display not only the language of Milton's forthright statements of psychological hellishness (he that hides a dark soul . . ./ Himself is his own dungeon," says the Elder Brother, and "myself am Hell," says Satan); they also reveal in the moral young poet the kernel which became the sequence in Books III and IV of the epic, where Satan uses the cloak of his protean powers to deceive Uriel, only to fall into guilty remorse further along the road he has guilefully cleared for himself.

The hidden "dark soul and foul thoughts" imputed to Comus precisely parallel the departure from divinity of the Satanic host in Heaven, by stealth under cover of God's darkness, and to a rebellious end. C. S. Lewis's fictional conception presents a scenario where "All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world," in which a narrator dreams that hs is speaking with a resident spirit in the purlieus of

Heaven. He is told that

> Good beats upon the damned incessantly as sound waves beat upon the ears of the deaf, but they cannot receive it. Their fists are clenched, their teeth are clenched, their eyes fast shut. First they will not, in the end they cannot, open their hands for gifts, or their mouths for food, or their eyes to see.[6]

Lewis's viewpoint gainsays the isolation of Milton's local Hell, where good is no longer present in any form, but it adds much to our idea of psychological Hell, which exists regardless of the damned entity's position in time or place.

How widespread is the belief in a state of psychological Hell today, it might be asked. How widespread was such a belief in Milton's day? C. A. Patrides notes that there has been a "Catholic attempt to preserve the traditional balance of opinion that Hell is 'a place as well as a state.'" On the other hand, he says, "Protestants . . . have ever since the Renaissance been more readily inclined in the direction of [Cambridge Platonist Benjamin] Whichcote's view that Heaven and Hell are not so much a Place, as a State.'"[7] By the time that Christian Scientist Mary Baker Eddy wrote early in this century, it could truthfully be said that "in place of material flames and odor, mental anguish is generally accepted as the penalty for sin."[8]

Any interpretation of the inner Hell must deal with the psychological state of reprobation as manifest to the external senses. Burning and the pain it produces are more than images of Hell, for the state of painful consumption defines the entire sensory experience of the fallen. The condition of reprobation diminishes the spirit, as Milton's portrayal of devils attests, so that finally "a damned soul is nearly nothing: it is shrunk, shut up in itself."[9] Thus even the local

three-dimensional Hell may be understood as the state of mind figured as the archdemon who says "myself am Hell," for the quality of the place Hell accords with Augustine's conclusion that the devil "became less than he had been, because, in wishing to enjoy his own power rather than God's, he wished to enjoy less."[10]

The reader of Paradise Lost is faced in Hell with a figure of evil more awful than Bunyan's merely "doleful" terror, the Giant Despair. Rather, he encounters Satan, who on the psychological plan is indeed himself Hell. He is not merely a personification of aspects of malevolence, even in light of his shape-shifting abilities, but evil incarnate, the analogue of the local Hell representing in his person every sort of evil. Within the confines of devilish possibility, his wickedness is not proscribed: he is the chief and most manipulative of the devils. Prince of the assigned deathly universe, he is surrounded there by cronies and troops, all of whom he attempts to lead in part by guile. On this side of Hell's gate he remains the chthonic principle, manifesting Hell where he is as Marlowe's Mephistophilis does. The same principle permeates Dante's Inferno, which pierces all of subterranean earth though Lucifer is only at the centre. Milton's local, physical Hell is therefore a mindscape of the Satanic mentality. Comparing Milton's Hell with Dante's, one critic says the Englishman's dungeon "is not a torture-chamber where specialized punishments are meted out to helpless convicts, but the natural abode of the irredeemably damned."[11] Pertinent to any question of "fit habitation" is this notion of "natural abode." Readers should recall, however, that although the psychological Hell is begun for humanity in Book IX, Milton's local Hell deals only with the angelic damned and not, as does the Inferno, with the spirits of

their human victims who become its posterior occupants.

Professor Grant McColley notes that in Milton's time there existed the belief "that the fallen angels, and necessarily Satan, always carried Hell and its excruciating tortures around with them." He cites the Thomist gloss on James 3:6, to the effect that "They carry the fire of Hell with them wherever they go."[12] McColley further calls attention to "the criticism which finds that after their fall into Hell the worst terror of the devils is inaction," which aligns with the conception of a punishing Hell as a place of perpetual discomfort, in which the damned find ". . . hell is their terminus. What activity remains for them is of the nature of a meaningless round, an endless marking time."[13] In this formulation the debased mentality cannot be actively evil except to itself, and it takes on the same stagnant quality as the locality created for incarceration. Nothing but horrors can grow in Milton's local Hell, and the mind which chooses Hell becomes the place "where peace/ And rest can never dwell, hope never comes/ That comes to all" (I, 65-67).[14]

The static Hell of redundant activity is certainly a feature of Dante's Inferno, where sinners forever "relive the past, or else stay fixed--grotesque mounted specimens--in horrible parody of their guilt."[15] Thus Milton's demonic breaking out at Hell-Mouth to corrupt God's newest creation is given an impetus beyond the vengeful impulse born of heavenly defeat, a motion toward space and variety which will alleviate the destined eternal round of gloom. The call for "lebensraum" (= "living space") in the totalitarian fascism of the German Third Reich is a modern parallel.

One way of looking at the devilish mind is in its collective manifestation, which is Satan errant. As in the Bible, where his

temptation of Eve represents the sum of evil in the universe so far as man is concerned, the devil's flight through Chaos symbolizes the worst the rebel collectivity can do. Edenic Satan is evil incarnate. His venture solus furthers both the psychological motif of "myself am Hell" and Professor Waldock's notion of the repetitive and hopeless drudgery of the condemned horde. This mob is, in the physical sense, "back" in Hell. When Satan is external to the local inferno he represents that macrocosm, while each lesser devil is understood to be engaged in futile activity within it.

All this goes some distance towards telling us what the psychological Hell is. Milton leaves no room for argument as to where it begins, for Satan's jealousy and pride in Heaven are clear, and these are failings acquiesced in shortly after by his legions, the "third part of Heav'n's Host" (V, 710) who follow him into warfare, thence to perdition. The rectitude of God's imposition of the hellish state is tied in Paradise Lost to Milton's belief that Hell as he describes it is appropriate as the domicile and exile of the first-tainted. He calls it, mental or local, "Hell thir fit habitation fraught with fire/ Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain" (VI, 876-77), and speaks of Satan "Punish't in the shape he sinn'd,/ According to his doom" (X, 516-17). When the devil returns in triumph from his first sortie outside this house of pain, only to endure the transformation to a serpent with all his cohorts, Milton records that "the dire form/ Catcht by Contagion, like in punishment,/ As in thir crime" (X, 543-45). The aspect of divine justice indicated is clearly the Old Testamental "an eye for an eye."[16]

The specifically hellish origin of the psychological Hell surfaces in Satan's proud boast that "The mind is its own place, and in

itself/ Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heaven" (I, 254-55). This results from his drive to be his own and his followers' master, a drive self-wrought as the source of sin but fixed in him eternally by God as the sentence for sin. Insofar as it guarantees his position as an autonomous local governor, the mind he brings "not to be chang'd by Place or Time" (I, 253) is an apparent blessing, but as that which confines him eternally to the psychological state of Hell, it is a curse. As for the overweening pride which spurred Satan's original revolt, the pride he exercised in self-deceit until he actually believed that "The mind is its own place," Augustine comments: "Clearly the wicked do not know that you are everywhere. But you are not bound within the limits of any place. You alone are always present, even to those who set themselves apart from you."[17]

If Hell is perceived as an analogue of the corrupt, self-ravaged mind that will not love God, then Heaven may be viewed as the physical manifestation and essential locality of the divine mind. This being so, we might well ask what Heaven would have looked like if it were left unrepaired after the cataclysmic divine thunder rattled around it. In the psychomachia of Book VI angels combat angels by tearing up the heavenly hills and hurling them at each other, so that "horrid confusion heapt/ Upon confusion rose: and now all Heav'n/ Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread" (VI, 668-70). The end result of this turmoil is a "mural breach" in Heaven's wall, through which the rebels are expelled. Though Milton tells us that all this was quickly repaired, a correspondence may exist between the actual damage and the appearance of Satan's face after these events, which in turn reflects the scoring of the archangelic psyche by the defeat and fall. In Hell the devil's visage is one which

"Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht," with a look of care which "Sat on his faded cheek" (I, 589, 590). Such an analogue jibes with that picture of the mind which so succinctly describes Milton's psychological approach to metaphysics, the mind which when uncorrupted does retain the element of choice which enables it, under God, to be "its own place." But the fallen archangel is "chang'd in outward lustre" (I, 97), with a face of "doubtful hue" (I, 527), and this alteration reflects his shaky aspirations, so that one is led by the thought that a mind can make "a Hell of Heav'n," to interpret Milton psychologically. This thought also foreshadows the self-doubt of the "myself am Hell" soliloquy. The irony in the arch-demon's bravado is that, having sought it, he achieves dominion, but not on the terms he intended. Sole commander and focus of the allegiance of a third of Heaven's angels, the spoil of his attempted insurrection is a wasted domain.

Created the great archangel Lucifer, in becoming Satan the devil exercised the free will his creation allowed him, choosing his own design instead of his Creator's and thereby falling to that state of mental pain divinely prepared for the selfish, of whom he was the first. R. M. Frye says of Satan, "Hell for him is existence as his own deity," and hence we have in the epic the contrast between the devil's first elevation in Pandemonium, "by merit rais'd to that bad eminence" where pride further puffed him up, and his debunking by divine decree when he returned to Hell exulting at man's fall, as

> His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
> His Arms clung to his Ribs, his Legs entwining
> Each other, till supplanted down he fell
> A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,
> Reluctant, but in vain (X, 511-15)

Schanzer explains the psychological correlative of this debasement by means of an astute comparison:

> Like his daughter Sin . . . Satan is forever conceiving and giving birth to the hellhounds, his tormenting thoughts and passions, which are incessantly barking and howling around him, kennelling in his mind and feeding on his entrails, leaving him no moment's respite or peace.[18]

Another analysis of the demonic condition finds in it the alternating duality of pride and despair. The megalomaniacal schizophrenia embraced by Satan is explained by seeing disaffection with God as the revolt against reality. As it is impossible to win independence from the Creator, Sacvan Bercovitch argues, Satan's "disobedience necessitates self-delusion; the process of his damnation works itself out in a constant contrast of reality and its negation--of despair and pride."[19] This is a strong argument for and definition of the psychological Hell. The critic elaborates somewhat:

> Satan tries to avoid torment by inverting what he sees, creating a world out of the non-qualities of false pleasure, false freedom, false virtue. His damnation lies in this enthrallment to self-delusion: he comes to need hell.[20]

Inner hellishness is tied to the nature of the illusion it embraces. As Bercovitch points out, "since no pure force of evil exists, the rebels must derive their substance from reality at the same time that they deny it."[21] Evil is the creative principle of nothing, yet the devil's conscious committal of himself to it in the macrocosm fills the epic's first two books. Finally, in internal debate, he abjures the dark side both within and without ("Evil be thou my Good"--IV, 110), effectively turning his reality on its end.

Hell is a place of both endless punishment for sin and a place

of unceasing sinning as punishment. D. P. Walker notes this paradox in The Decline of Hell (1964):

> According to the orthodox doctrine of a morally static afterlife, the damned are eternally punished only for sins committed in this life. In hell, since as a punishment their will has been made immutably evil, their blasphemy and hatred of God are not, strictly speaking, sins, because they do not proceed from free will, and cannot therefore justly be punished.[22]

The point is that punishment for worldly sin, or in the devils' case for their hubris in Heaven, is punitive enough. But if the duress and effects of punishment wane, that is, if time healed sin, Hell as Milton sees it might indeed become tenable, therefore not hellish. Since, as Walker says, the punishment of the damned is to have their will made immutably evil, they must exist extrinsic to what is immutably good. Yet exist they must to endure their sentence, and hence the prepared receptacle, Hell. Here the devils find, as Beelzebub first speculated, that God intentionally "left us this our spirit and strength entire/ Strongly to suffer and support our pains" (I, 146-47).

The fallen angels arrive in Hell with the same divine fire which ignites it and gives it its onerous character. Those of a quantifying bent might posit that the semi-divine effulgence which is part of character and joy in Heaven was separated from the rebels and transmogrified to become the fire of divine rage external to the essences which previously contained it in grace. The physical element of their punishment for rebellion against God is the constraint to occupy this place of agonizing extremes. The psychological element, including the ultimately painful and ever-present memory of the lost happy realm, is condemnation to embrace forever the stubborn perversity of will which

first separated them from God. This absolute reprobation, precluding the hope of final salvation, is the most painful aspect of the rebel's sentence. Their actions in damnation, whether to build "a Heav'n of Hell" or to escape the infernal lot, only fan the flames and condense the ice of their dungeon. They cannot adopt the truly contemplative mode; they cannot be thoughtfully still amidst the pain for any longer than their attention at the Pandemonium council lasts. The single-minded conviction of rectitude, the principal characteristic of their inexorable wilfulness, denies them this composure even in the sameness of the endless round. Among the recusant angels in Heaven only Abdiel evinces contrition when the false pretences of the march of the Satanic host are revealed. All the rest consciously espouse the error which for every one but Satan has until then been unwitting, and so damn themselves to the "fit habitation" of mental torture and enfeeblement.

The topography discovered by the exploring devils is Milton's best description of the local Hell. Hughes notes, however, that the mythological creatures mentioned, the "Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimaeras dire" (II, 628), are "vague," "not to be taken literally," and "symbolic," so that the scouting demons are met, presumably, more by psychological than by living horrors,[23] as is the first glance of Satan in Hell, when it appears

> The dismal Situation waste and wild,
> A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round
> As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
> No light, but rather darkness visible
> Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all, but torture without end
> Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed
> With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd (I, 60-69)

This is less a list of physical characteristics than a catalogue of mental agonies, although the mention of the primary constituent of hot and self-replenishing sulphur enhances its value as local description.

The "bottomless" aspect of the rebels' exile ("eternal wrath/ Burnt after them to the bottomless pit" [VI, 865-66]) reinforces the horror first articulated in their "doubtful consultations dark" (II, 486), when slouched, gold-loving Mammon's advice to endure and make the best of the pit elicits an approving roar, "for such another Field/ They dreaded worse than Hell" (II, 292-93). Professor Curry's illustration of Milton's cosmos shows Hell at the bottom of a spherical universe, corresponding to the psychological nadir its name implies to the modern reader.[24] When Satan seeks passage through the "bottomless abyss" of Chaos, however,

> Flutt'ring his pennons vain plumb down he drops
> Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour
> Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
> The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud
> Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him
> As many miles aloft (II, 933-38)

Thus Milton indicates true, unfigurable bottomlessness, a geographical infinitude of descent without hope of rising. The psychological cognate of endless physical falling is the devils' everlasting apprehension that chasms of intensifying mental anguish will open beneath them forever. This unlimited state is also what Satan envisions when, their course of indirect attack settled upon, he guilefully asks the demonic peers who will cross "The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss" (II, 405).[25]

The devilish magnate reveals his own uncertainty even about the painful present when, on Mount Niphates in sight of the mild Edenic target of his corruption, he reasons with himself: "in the lowest deep, a lower deep/ Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide/ To which the

Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n" (IV, 76-78). Cleverest of devils, Satan is here not ignorant of the bottomlessness of his awful realm. Though strongly evoked, however, Milton's manner of expressing this eternal fear of endless falling to unending pain is mostly conditional, and though the criminality of further attempts upon God through His creatures is fulfilled in the epic, the anticipated punishment is realized also, in the ultimate loss of angelic stature by transformation to the reptilian condition. What this means is that the devils' "lower deep" turns out to be the degradation of their faculties in bestiality, the absolute denial of intellect and psyche, and thus of grace.

Within the poem's parameters, however, the bottomlessness and the eternality of the devils' exile and the threats of infinitude in their sentence never plague them except prophetically, when God forecasts the eventual obstruction of the mouth of Hell forever (X, 635-37). Nevertheless, the rebels' transformation to vipers creates in them a psychological state of such vile proportions that the Hell they suffer in the first two books finally does seem a Heaven.

The poet builds up to Satan's "myself am Hell" soliloquy, when the archdemon's purpose falters briefly, with

> horror and doubt distract
> His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stir
> The Hell within him, for within him Hell
> He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
> One step no more than from himself can fly
> By change of place (IV, 18-23)

This aligns closely with the more matter-of-fact profession of condition by Marlowe's Mephistophilis, who is not apparently in inner turmoil like Satan, but rather in straight conversation with the entrepreneurial Faustus about the fate of the latter's soul. Yet Satan's self-examination

in sight of Eden is perhaps the most puissant evidence for the psychological Hell in Paradise Lost, and it is worth comparing it with Marlowe's conception. In Faustus the jaded doctor questions his devilish partner:

> Faustus: First I will question with thee about hell.
> Tell me where is the place that men call hell?
>
> Mephistophilis: Under the heavens.
>
> Faustus: Ay, so are all things else, but whereabouts?
>
> Mephistophilis: Within the bowels of these elements,
> Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:
> Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
> And where hell is, there must we ever be:
> And, to be short, when all the world dissolves,
> And every creature shall be purified,
> All places shall be hell that is not heaven.
> (Doctor Faustus, II, i, 116-27, p. 86)

The uncircumscribed, limitless Hell that is all places that are not Heaven is easily translatable into psychological terms. St. Paul provides a useful opposition between good and evil in his letter to the Galatians. Many of its terms are mental and spiritual rather than physical and active:

> Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and the like . . . But the fruit of the Spirit is life, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against these there is no law. (Galatians 5:19-23)

In Milton's conception, neither Heaven nor Hell is different in substance from the terrestrial scene. Certainly in terms of utility the make-up of material is more or less a continuum throughout existence, as the rebel angels' continuing mechanistic ways demonstrate. From one viewpoint this argues in favour of an allegorical interpretation of Milton's construct in Paradise Lost, which in turn inclines toward a

purely psychological understanding of Hell. The mind turned from God does indeed, it might be said, make "a Hell of Heav'n," and the vast distances of physical isolation may be seen as symbolic of the spiritual separation of devils from God. Schanzer deals very aptly with the relationship between the physical and the psychological hells:

> When Satan and his followers create a state of Hell in their own minds they are expelled into a region which in material terms mirrors their mental state. The actual fall from Heaven . . . is thus merely the geographical adjustment to an already accomplished series of spiritual events . . . . [and] the movement from God to the Self leads inevitably towards isolation which will land us sooner or later in a region as remote as possible from the Universe of light and love and joy . . . . The mental Hell is thus essentially marginal. And therefore Milton locates the abode of Hell "in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos," as remote as possible from the light of Heaven.[26]

This is further argument for the poet's contention that Hell as he portrays it is "fit habitation" for the reprobate.

The reader who bears in mind the devils' supernatural capabilities should find it easy to transpose their existence into psychological terms. To human understanding angels and devils are already, so to speak, half way to abstract principles. Though the spiritual beings of each realm have the power of flight denied to man, they are subject to something akin to gravity, and their respective abodes have solid foundations of an earthy sort. In Hell this is the "burning Marl" and the vast, bleak topography implied by the list of features discovered in the first reconnaisance of the devils, the blazing and icy mountains and the "Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death" (II, 621). Except for the peculiar non-luminous lighting and the unquenchable reeking fire everywhere, there is nothing supernatural about hellish reality as Milton describes it, yet much that is unusual. Presumably the concentration of

diverse surface features in the list above does not so much signify a geographical potpourri in microcosm as a widely-spread assortment of grim characteristics encountered quickly because of the speed of winged travel, even when the travellers are dejected and horrified. But Milton's picture leaves the exploring devils' mode of travel uncertain. "Roving" (II, 614) clearly signifies wandering, but what precisely is "confus'd march" (615)? Is it disoriented walking? Is it erratic flight? When the devils pass through "many a dark and dreary Vale" (618) their transport seems the former; when they go over frozen and fiery alps (620) it seems the latter. It may be important to perceive the devils as the flighted, spiritual creatures Milton only sometimes portrays, in order to best imagine their milieu. After all, in Hell we find them "Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell/ 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires" (I, 345-46).

If all this seems to deal rather exclusively in the purely physical characteristics of the devils, the reader may remember that it is a mark of the mythopoeic process to personify and allegorize the more abstruse aspects of being and mind. This was no doubt so even among the ancient Hebrews struggling between philosophy and revelation. Bearing this in mind, it is evident that a consideration of the supernatural elements in Milton's dark spirits, though ostensibly an analytical or scientific study of attributes, easily comes around to the investigation of what these spirits and their characteristics represent. Though this is scope for a much broader study than the one in hand, it remains the study of the psychological Hell.

As in other chapters, a note should be made about Milton's inclusion of the rivers of the classical netherworld in his epic. Dustin

Griffin observes that the classical names of Milton's hellish rivers,

> accompanied by etymologically derived epithets, bring out both bitter passion and the sorrow of the damned. They are filled with "deadly hate" and "rage," but also with "sad sorrow" and "lamentation loud."[27]

Here rage and lamentation are examples of exteriorized anguish, but hate and sorrow are certainly aspects of an introspective experience. In Hughes's "Myself Am Hell" (1956), the author concludes that

> . . . quite definitely--the rivers of [Milton's] hell are allegorical . . . .
>
> The sophisticated idea of hell is implicit in the names of the four rivers themselves, as Milton implies by his explanations of them in the text [II, 577-86]. As he well knew, he was on ground familiar to his readers.[28]

All the rivers of classical Hades are included in Paradise Lost, but in manifesting the psychological Hell as in delineating the physical sort, Milton particularly uses the stream of oblivion, Lethe, telling how angels exploring the hellish construct, suffering most from the memory of former glory amidst present gloom, are deprived of the river's balm of forgetfulness, for "of itself the water flies/ All taste of living wight" (II, 612-13). As a result, "Th' advent'rous Bands," despondent and aghast, can find no rest, for their field of operations remains unforgettably "A Universe of death." This means that, even with a penal sentence that stretches to eternity, the devilish psyche cannot lose by process of time what torments it most, the memory of Heaven.

One tactic the devils employ to divert their attention from their loss is disciplined military parade. Milton tell us this alleviates their immediate agony but, as one critic points out,

> when they sink their "Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain" [I, 558] the devils must also drown their individuality in the comforting sea of mass movement, swayed to mass emotion by the hypnosis of massed bands.[29]

The obvious historical parallel for modern readers is the thought-control of Adolf Hitler's military and propaganda machines.[30]

There has been much discussion about the hellish trinity of Satan, Sin, and Death, particularly apropos its direct opposition to the traditional heavenly Trinity. Since my subject is that part of the epic dealing with the corrupt triumvirate, I will attempt to further the comparative discussion only on one or two points. First, an item of practical morality from John Bunyan's allegory The Pilgrim's Progress. Speaking of Mr. Fearing, a character with extreme "scruples of conscience," pilgrim Honest calls him "A very zealous man . . . . Difficulties, Lions, or Vanity-Fair he feared not at all; 'Twas only Sin, Death, and Hell that was to him a terror."[31] Here is a type of the Christian warrior both Spenser and Milton aimed to depict. To such a one outward temptations and afflictions are less to be feared than the ways of pride and ravin of Satan and his grotesque children.

Secondly, a comparison between the infernal trinity and the Hindu outlook on Hell expressed in the Bhagavad Gita might helpfully be made. Here, the god Krishna tells the troubled warrior Arjuna: "Three are the gates to this hell, the death of the soul: the gate of lust, the gate of wrath, and the gate of greed."[32] Now lust, wrath, and greed are cognate with Sin, Death, and Satan, or Hell. The attributes of the demonic triumvirate are interchangeable, but even dealing with the wicked kingpin alone, it is seen that Satan's greed for God's throne fuels the antagonistic subplot, as do his insatiable lust for the vengeance such

an acquisition will bring with it and the implacable wrath at defeat that feeds that lust. And this deals only with the father of evil, saying nothing of the wickednesses developed in the more allegorical figures of his spawn at Hell's gate. Dr. Rajan notes the ambiguity in the roles of these dread figures when he says, "On the boundary between Hell and Chaos are two creatures who do not belong completely to either kingdom." Continuing, he indirectly cites the chief sources of the entire Miltonic œuvre: "Sin and Death have the customary Miltonic ancestry--they are compounded out of Biblical texts, patristic commentary, classical myth and contemporary poetry."[33]

Of particular interest as a psychological icon is Milton's character Death, the amorphous darkness sitting guard at the gate of Hell with its mother Sin. Death is a ghoul, that is, a demon preying on corpses. Originating in Muslim superstition, the Arabic gūl was a protean desert demon. Thus Death's lust for general destruction in addition to his anthropophagous relish is apt in Milton. Both these attributes are otherwise explainable in light of his strictly allegorical character, which is perhaps the most straightforward in the poem. To man no certainty of existence is as simple or inexorable as death. Even Satan, obscene progenitor of both Sin and Death and the subsuming principle of both, is only ever estimable by moral criteria which are relative, but death is sure. In fact, occupied Hell, because its essence is one of privation or the negation of Heaven's plenitude, takes on the waste, carrion quality of Death. Similarly, once the soul or vital principle has left it, the human body is food only for worms. The irony in this situation of decay is that once Satan has started Earth's corruption and Sin and Death have built a bridge between it and Hell to

perpetuate the process, the devil and his minions are turned into creatures bound in the depraved and worm-like form of snakes. In this form also the final dignity of composure is withdrawn from the devils, for whether they will or not the overwhelming appetitiveness of their condition drives them ravening after the phantom fruit. In this, Milton's ultimate debasing of the devils, memory of their former glory is left intact in the devilish psyche sufficient to highlight but not to avoid their helplessness in the face of a low and markedly unintellectual urge. Though Satan proclaims himself unaffected by time and place, he cannot escape his terminal placement by God in Hell. Finally, he and his legions will be barricaded in by Sin, Death, and Grave, who will together form the obstruction in Hell's Gate that will forever "seal up his ravenous Jaws" (X, 637).

In regard to the onerous nature of Hell and the still more frightening divine cause of its ignition, it is fitting to add to these references from Milton's epic Satan's emotionally truthful statement of aim in his guileful speech to Christ in Paradise Regained, where the poet makes the devil's own perception of the psychological Hell clearer:

> all hope is lost
> Of my reception into grace: what worse?
> For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
> If there be worse, the expectation more
> Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
> I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
> My harbour and my ultimate repose;
> The end I would attain, my final good.
> (Complete Poems, 509-10)[34]

This speech indicates that the unknown extent of their condemnation constantly nags at the devils' thoughts, becoming to them in some part the very "lower deep" and "Field they dreaded worse" they most fear.

This is why Hell is "where peace/ And rest can never dwell, hope never comes/ That comes to all." Those who must always expect a worse Hell Milton makes out with telling irony to be those to whom "the expectation more/ Of worse torments me than the feeling can." This is the vital paradox that entraps the minds of those who will not love God.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper has been to assist the reader's understanding of the complex and singular Miltonic Hell, to elucidate its quantities and qualities, its horrors and agonies, both physical and psychological. In this concluding chapter I look briefly at Milton's sources and at the question of whether his conception of Hell is indeed "fit habitation" for those who will not obey God.

From the demons' perspective, it is not enough to get out of Hell, for the weight of their sentence is the deprivation of Heaven, and the bar to that realm remains to them. Though local Hell may be escaped, neither palpable nor psychological Heaven may be regained. Looking at the epic from a strategic viewpoint with the devils in mind, we should perceive a clear progression: a third of Heaven's angels revolt, are quelled and expelled, mount a second, indirect attack from their place of exile, are apparently successful but soon have their triumph proved an ignoble failure, and are then left until a future day of judgement when their loss will be irrevocable and their further attempts to redeem it will be nullified. In fact, the poem involves only two punitive actions, with a prophecy of a third and final battle. In the second campaign against God, the apparent victory by guile, demonic exultation is not only proved false when the rebels are constrained to assume the form of the bestial tool of their sedition, it is also foreshadowed as hollow by Satan's self-examination, which concludes, "Which way I fly is Hell;

myself am Hell" (IV, 75). Though this precedes an act of temptation whose immediate goal is achieved, there is an immutable quality to Satan's realization which is reinforced by the metaphysics of the entire epic. God's decree, whether it involves condemnation or sanctification, remains final, for the divine will is unchanged in good, in evil. Both righteousness and wickedness are their own reward. The good may refrain from or embrace evil, but the reprobate will always fight against the good, being damned. Milton's formulation of these tenets in Paradise Lost demonstrates his great knowledge of the effects of discipline, both blessed and demonic. In Heaven Lucifer and his angels replaced their ordained state with one of envy. Mankind's fall was for the same reason, indicating the simplicity of the divine order.

The wider thrust of Milton's treatment of Hell in Books I and II, and, in fact, a desired effect throughout the poem, is what D. P. Walker calls "Hell's greatest strength, its deterrent effect in this life."[1] The folly of ignoring the deterrent is exemplified by Lewis in his story about transportation to Heaven's environs.[2] Lewis uses quantitative conceptions in a fashion which could fit either Dante's or Milton's model when he has a welcoming celestial explain Hell to his narrator: "All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world: but it is smaller than one atom of this world, the Real World."[3] This cosmology is designed to illustrate that "Bad cannot succeed in being bad as truly as good is good."[4] In Lewis's story the dreaming narrator looks at a small yellow bird singing in a heavenly tree and asks, "And she couldn't make herself smaller--like Alice, you know?" His angelic teacher replies: "Nothing like small enough. For a damned soul is nearly nothing: it is shrunk, shut up in itself."[5]

As J. E. Duncan points out, it is among these shrunken, self-imprisoned souls that a desire to mitigate the pain of the external Hell "prompts the suggestions of remaining intellectually superior to hell, of improving it, and of escaping from it."[6] Yet, however elevated intellectual superiority may seem, this desire to ease pain is based on what in the devils' case we must call "spirit-comfort," and not on contrition. In the critic's estimation,

> Both the hell of punishment and the feverish activity of the military base [Pandemonium] contribute to the effectiveness . . . of the psychological hell. The burning lake seethes with the fire of hatred and rage as well as with brimstone. The physical and psychological torments are coupled and remain inseparable.[7]

This speaks to what I have said about the somewhat anthropomorphic nature of hellfire, the eternal residue of divine wrath. It could be put that God's final gift to His devils is rage, both external and internal. Indeed, with vain philosophizing they "charm/ Pain for a while or anguish" (II, 566-67), but in futility they find that neither action nor contemplation gain them the oblivion they seek.

Results of this are intellectual confusion and philosophical frustration, so that finally the devils long to know the worst they must endure. M. C. Miller remarks that the Satanic need to know the whole extent of the assigned punishment is found among humanity as well, reflecting the fear of partnership not with God, but with pain and darkness forever.[8] In Paradise Lost, fallen Adam, forgiven the penalty of immediate death for his sin, exclaims, "How gladly would I meet/ Mortality my sentence," lest "both Death and I/ Am found eternal, and incorporate both" (X, 775-76, 815-16). Another example of how the inner Hell affected the post-lapsarian humans is found in Book X, where Adam, in the

throes of his "fierce passion," regrets his creation: "O Conscience, into what Abyss of fears/ And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which/ I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!" (X, 841-44). Milton's consideration of Lethe ties into this, being conventionally designed to portray the unavailability of comfort to the fallen angels, as in similar fashion "for fallen man, the longed-for oblivion of death is not an acceptable solution to the problem of a life of pain in a fallen world."[9] Some criticism with a strong human orientation takes a sympathetic line on the explorers who find Lethe but not its balm, claiming that though the fallen angels are lost souls, their suffering is recognizable as a form of human experience.[10]

Milton's Hell contains no human damned, however; yet, as Irene Samuel says:

> . . . Milton's devils are men writ large: if they have little in common with the demons of Inferno, they constantly remind us of its human damned. The types of evil for which Dante ransacked history, legend, and his own era, Milton created in his fallen angels.[11]

Finally, there is no difference between demonic and human agony in Hell except the Dantesque lordship of the resident overseers. This lordship is foreseen by Satan and the demonic peers as they formulate their plan for Earth, and especially in the ravin anticipated by Death. But, though the reality of Hell's slavery is brought forth more gruesomely in Dante's rolling terza rima, unlike Milton, the Italian poet alleviates his grim verse with a humorous episode. In Canto XXII of the Inferno, a victim whose fate it was to be boiled in burning pitch escapes his grotesque guardians by trickery.[12] This single comic interlude in a grisly progression of punishments is surely also a symbol of hope. One of the

damned wily enough to elude his hellish captors in their own torture-chamber prefigures the less onerous and infinite ordeals of the Purgatorio, simultaneously justifying Dante's title Commedia. No comparable episode occurs in the tragedy of Paradise Lost. Only the structural similarity of the angel Abdiel amidst Lucifer's newly apostate legions in Heaven is found there, and there is no humour in his plight or in the way he deals with it.

Hilaire Belloc rightly notes that "all through Milton's work [an] incapacity for laughter appears."[13] There is not a single clearly humorous line in Paradise Lost. With his own ribaldry, Belloc says of the poet: "When Milton attempts humour it is as though some great ecclesiastic, devoted to high ceremony, were to stand upon his head before the altar."[14]

It could be asserted that the concepts of good and evil ought to be considered in their relative light in a work dealing with psychomachia and its results, which man can only know intuitively. We may consider Dame Philosophy's Raphael-like instruction to her latter-day Adam, Boethius:

> It is only the power of God to which evils may also be good, when by their proper use He elicits some good result. For a certain order embraces all things, and anything which departs from the order planned and assigned to it, only falls back into order, albeit a different order, so as not to allow anything to chance in the realm of Providence.[15]

As Boethius points out regarding man's ignorance of the working of things in general, "The reason for this blindness is that the operation of human reasoning cannot approach the immediacy of divine foreknowledge."[16] Indeed, Raphael and Michael, God's interlocutory agents to newly-created mankind, must modulate their communiqués to human sensibilities or they

would be erroneously perceived, if perceived at all, on Earth. Similarly, the reader's understanding must be gained through spacio-temporal media, and Milton can only provide a jumping-off point in the quest for spirituality. Hence Raphael teaches Adam that

> Time may come when men
> With Angels may participate . . .
> . . . . . .
> Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit,
> Improved by tract of time . . .
> or may at choice
> Here or in Heav'nly Paradises dwell.
> (V, 493-500)

Here the states of temporality and what is beyond time are clearly made to depend upon some sense of place. So it is that Milton's theodicial purpose is furthered in part by his particular concept of local states, be they heavenly, as here, or hellish.

A great deal of the success of Milton's portrayal of Hell is due to the particular tenacity with which he clung to that necessity of any omniscient narrator, the vicarious living of one's characters' existence in order to communicate it. Various critics have lauded the blind poet's "cinematic" acumen. Even a first reading leaves the reader sufficiently aware of a weltering feeling, for example, when abruptly propelled to the surface of the boiling pot of Greek fire that is Hell's definitive liquid state, the central lake.[17] But by no means all of Milton's ideas of a residency in Hell are based on purely academic constructs. There are acquisitions from the life rather than the studies, such as his acquaintance with Italy's volcanic Phlegraean Fields and, in the treatment of the "inner Hell," his own blindness.[18] Another likely instance of formative material from outside the literary trade is this, that the man who wrote of the defection from God's cause and consequent

expulsion from His courts of a third of the heavenly host (all from the authority of Revelation) had, while living in the peace of Horton in Buckinghamshire, witnessed the loss of one-third of his parish in the plague year of 1637. This may well have spurred his consideration of traditional Judaeo-Christian psychomachia.

Because of misfortune in marriage and politics and the advent of blindness in middle age, Milton had ample insight into the psychological Hell. He knew that the whole discussion of this experience must revolve to a great extent around its manifestation in the fallen humans, described in the latter parts of Books IX and X. This has everything to do with lascivious sex. The sublime and natural sex of angels is perverted in the devils, along with every other good in their nature, and it is this debased sex that infects the humans after the fall. Shortly before, the unnatural generation of a foul trinity from one miscreant angel was explained by Sin to her unholy father.[19] Her own birth from Satan's head is a play upon purely psychological incestuous evil.

In the meantime, Milton's depiction of Earth indicates a place of minimal divinity (as distinct from demonic anti-divinity) in terms of the emotional and intellectual joys as well as the apparent spatiality. Earth as the lowest heaven is in accord with Satan's view of it as a "happy seat," a place relatively sublime in comparison with Hell because "Nearer our ancient seat" (II, 394). But to gain this easy abode, the devils must corrupt the original intelligent inhabitants, so that, to John Hankins's observation that "the outer darkness of hell corresponds to and results from an inner blindness of the sinner's heart," may be added St. Augustine's remark that

> The prodigal son of the Scriptures . . . . set his heart on pleasure and his soul was blinded, and this blindness was the measure of the distance he travelled away from [God], so that he could not see [His] face.[20]

Augustine's reverse ratio serves to introduce the study of sources. One part of Milton's epic which has exercised much scholarship is the council in Pandemonium. In his article "The Infernal Council" (1918), Olin H. Moore explains the alternating development of the supernatural conclave in literature.[21] This assembly was a development of various incarnations of positive and negative attribution, one growing in reverse form from another. The council of the Greek gods summoned by Jupiter in the Homeric hymn to Demeter, for example, became the infernal council in the Latin imitation by Claudian, a contemporary of St. Augustine. Claudian's picture drew in addition from the council of the gods in the Aeneid, X, 1-168. This sort of switching of details from one writer's divine council to another's demonic conclave "had many parallels in the later history of the subject."[22]

Speaking of Milton's Nativity Ode (1629), Moore notes that "The description of the monsters of the deep, which slink into their holes at the approach of Christ, is imitated closely from Virgil's account of the monsters seen by Aeneas in Hades," and he quotes the following:

> And more,
> so many monstrous shapes of savage beasts
> are stabled there: Centaurs and double-bodied
> Scyllas; the hundred-handed Briareus;
> the brute of Lerna, hissing horribly;
> Chimaera armed with flames; Gorgons and Harpies;
> and Geryon, the shade that wears three bodies.
> (Aeneid, VI, 376-82)

This list may have informed Milton's short catalogue of huge and malformed things the exploring angels discovered haunting Hell as with

horror they verified its deathly character. In addition, says the critic, "The description of the monsters in [Sannazaro's] De Partu Virginis [1526] . . . influenced Vida, Tasso, and Milton."[23]

From such diverse backgrounds grew, in particular, the strong opposition between heavenly and hellish councils in Paradise Lost. The structural antithesis may have been suggested to the poet by the traditional antipathy between the Seven Deadly Sins and their opposite virtues, as delineated, for example, in John Gower's Mirour de l'omme (ca. 1400) and William Langland's Piers Plowman (ca. 1362).[24] The former poem merits further mention. J. S. P. Tatlock has noted how the striking details of the "Sin and Death" episode in Milton's epic are paralleled in the Mirour de l'omme in particular. The seven daughters got by the son Death on the mother Sin in Gower's work and paralleled by Milton's "cry of Hell Hounds" (II, 654), are the traditional Seven Deadly Sins of Christian dogma. Gower has the Devil send these beings among men, "just as Sin and Death follow Milton's Satan to this world."[25]

Biblical interpretations of fire as judgement which are germane to Milton's poetry include Genesis 19:24: "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire . . . out of heaven," and Revelation 1:14, in which St. John the Divine relates his vision of the Son of Man, whose eyes "were as a flame of fire." Now Sodom was a symbol of vice and infamy that with Gomorrah (Hebrew "submersion") was destroyed by a gaseous explosion that inundated the towns with hot salt and sulphur. The story has close parallels with Milton's hellish imagery. After the righteous destruction, for example, Abraham "looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Genesis 19:28).

The wasted panorama evoked here, as an entire lowland lies ruined beneath the Dead Sea mountains, quickly brings to mind Satan's view from the burning lake. Turning to Beelzebub, who lies beside him there, the archdemon asks:

> Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wild,
> The seat of desolation, void of light,
> Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
> Casts pale and dreadful? (I, 180-83)

Gomorrah is not mentioned in Paradise Lost, but Milton speaks of the demonic "Sons of Belial" troubling the streets of "luxurious cities": "Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night/ In Gibeah, when the hospitable door/ Exposed a matron, to prevent worse rape" (I, 503-05). "That night in Gibeah" refers to an incident of brutal rape in the Israelites' civil war with the Benjaminites, recorded in Judges 19 and 20.

Ill-fated Sodom is again mentioned when the fallen angels have been turned to serpents: "greedily they pluck'd/ That fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew/ Near that bituminous Lake where Sodom flam'd" (X, 560-62). As recorded, the Dead Sea was called Lake Asphaltitis, and is cognate with Milton's "Asphaltic Pool" (I, 411).

Such biblical references, along with various contemporary relations, are occasional and intermittent in the epic. Overall, Milton's Hell is loosely modelled on the Virgilian underworld in Aeneid VI. As Griffin notes, "From the Aeneid Milton drew especially on the accounts of the games and pleasures of Elysium, the four rivers of hell, and the crossing of Lethe."[26] Once Aeneas passes the Styx, he traverses the Fields of Mourning, passes by the realm of Tartarus where the damned are tortured, and enters glad Elysium, where he observes happy souls engaged in the games of the ancient Mediterranean, upon which Milton's devils'

sports are based:

> Some exercise
> their limbs along the green gymnasiums
> or grapple on the golden sand, compete
> in sport, and some keep time with moving feet
> to dance and chant. There, too, the Thracian priest,
> the long-robed Orpheus, plays.
> . . . . . .
> their spears are planted,
> fixed in the ground; their horses graze and range
> freely across the plain.
> . . . . . .
> And here to right and left he can see others:
> some feasting on the lawns; and some chanting
> glad choral paeans in a fragrant laurel
> grove. (Aeneid, VI, 642-58)[27]

Here Griffin comments:

> Milton's classical hell is a combination of all three parts of the Virgilian underworld. The games (much changed) are drawn from the joyous field of gladness; the torments of bitter cold and parching air, and the harpy-footed Furies, parallel the tortures of Tartarus; but the atmosphere of frustration and restlessness, the distinctive characteristic of Milton's hell, suggest the first region of Virgil's underworld [the Lugentes Campi, or Fields of Mourning].[28]

In the last sentence Griffin hits upon the definitive ambience of the occupied Hell. He deals further with this restless futility, observing that "For the fallen angels choice only leads to perplexity; they find no truce to restless thoughts, no rest."[29]

In comparing the demonic and mortal conditions described in the poem, one notes that just as man must wander the earth in toil until redeemed by Christ, so too the devilish mass "must entertain the irksome hours" until Satan returns, ostensibly to lead them to a new and easy home.[30] But the contests with which the devils pass the time are not to demonstrate prowess nor to gain glory, but to forget pain. Their result is that "with feats of arms/ From either end of heaven the welkin burns"

(II, 537-38), lines which cause Griffin to ponder whether "'Feats of arms' may hint via 'feet of arms' at the monstrous, unnatural quality of their efforts . . . ."[31] If it does, it points in addition to the sort of medieval conception of hellish imitation portrayed in Inferno, XXV, which is architecturally extant in gargoyles.

Yet not pain but protracted chagrin at being diminished most affects the devils, so that Satan at first exclaims to Beelzebub:

> If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
> From him, who in the happy realms of Light
> Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
> Myriads though bright . . .
> into what Pit thou seest
> From what highth fall'n (I, 84-87, 91-92)

This demonstrates the importance of the chiefly mental anguish the devils endure at the loss of Heaven. In spite of Milton's wonderful imagery, the intellectual netherworld within Satan and his fellows does preponderate over the physical scenery of their abode. This chthonic mentality is coloured by the "Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd" (I, 220) on its bearers. It is cognate partly with the transformation episode where the devils' post-lapsarian exultation is spoiled, and partly with the explanation of God's anger as judgement:

> See with what heat these Dogs of Hell advance
> To waste and havoc yonder World, which I
> So good and fair created, and had still
> Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man
> Let in these wasteful Furies, who impute
> Folly to mee, so doth the Prince of Hell
> And his adherents, that with so much ease
> I suffer them to enter and possess
> A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem
> To gratify my scornful Enemies,
> That laugh, as if transported with some fit
> Of Passion, I to them had quitted all,
> At random yielded up to their misrule;
> And know not that I call'd them thither
> My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth

> Which man's polluting Sin with taint hath shed
> On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
> With suckt and glutted offal, at one sling
> Of thy victorious Arm, well-pleasing Son,
> . . . . . .
> [they] obstruct the mouth of Hell
> For ever, and seal up his ravenous Jaws.
> Then Heav'n and Earth renew'd shall be made pure
> To sanctity that shall receive no stain:
> Till then the Curse pronounc't on both precedes.
> (X, 616-40)

The end of all demonic adventure is here divinely foretold.

Such explanation puts the devils very much in their place and adds to the general impression the reader gets that Milton's Hell is indeed "fit habitation" for the fallen. This is a concept I return to shortly. But as Professor Rajan says,

> Within the limited circle of their vision the inhabitants of Hell <u>are</u> heroic and tragic and if hell makes so profound an impression on us it is because it is consistent on its own terms. In addition, the terms are part of ourselves. Since we are fallen, we live partially in Hell and our response to it therefore, must be one of recognition as well as of animosity. But living in it, we must also learn to judge it; the growth of the poem is the growth of that learning.[32]

And lest the rhetoric of Hell Milton so aptly employs overwhelm us in the study of this judgement, E. M. Forster's short story "The Celestial Omnibus" provides a positive foil. This tale of a little boy's repeated journey to Heaven speaks of "the fangless Cerberus of Heaven" and "the diviner Acheron."[33]

Proceeding in the comparison of Dante's and Milton's hells, one recognizes that the reprobate in the former's subterranean realm stay in the circle in which the judgement of their sin places them, to suffer the same agony unendingly. In Milton they change under duress from heat to cold and back again. As Hankins notes, "Dante considers such a change a

boon to be denied; Milton considers it a penalty to be enforced."[34] His argument is that "When we read medieval visions of the afterworld, we can see at once that Milton does not borrow his details from Dante but probably was influenced by the visions which were Dante's own sources."[35] Elaborating upon possible origins of the Hell that burns both hot and cold, he tells us that Milton's reciprocating punishments are found in the twelfth-century Vision of William, in Bede's Vision of Dryhthelm (699), and in the Vision of the Monk of Evesham (1196).[36] In addition, Milton's "frozen Continent," where "cold performs th' effect of Fire" (II, 595) upon the damned brought there to languish immovable in ice, may have originated in the medieval fantasy called the Vision of Alberic (1127). Hankins says, after determining that the Dantesque lake of ice appears in the work, that Alberic, who used it to punish adulterers, "says he saw great heaps of ice, the cold from which burned the sufferers like fire."[37]

What about Milton's use of geography in his construct? E. N. S. Thompson notes that "A widespread interest in geography is still plainly discernible in the writings of the men of [the seventeenth century]," and that when Milton wished, he "could use . . . uncolored [historical] material in Paradise Lost for higher ends."[38] Citing the grand epic simile constructed with the mortar of geography which defines the bridge-building of Sin and Death, he says,

> Mere facts are finely sublimated in these lines, for example:
>
> As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
> upon the Cronian sea, together drive
> Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagined way
> Beyond Petsora eastward to the rich
> Cathaian coast. (X, 289-93)

Yet behind this splendid figure lie the prosaic words of Milton's history:

> The river Pechora or Petzora, holding his course through Siberia, how far the Russians thereabouts know not, runneth into the sea at seventy-two mouths, full of ice. (Brief History of Moscovia . . .)[39]

The Brief History of Moscovia (n.d.) is a summary of Milton's readings in the works of contemporary explorers.

This analyst also thinks it likely that Milton had considerable reference to Diodorus Siculus, a Sicilian Greek of the first century B.C. upon whose treasure trove of history he expands specifically:

> In Paradise Lost we find the simile:
>
> A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
> Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
> Where armies whole have sunk.
> (II, 592-94)

The passage could have been drawn from this passage in Diodorus:

> There's a Lake between Coelo-Syria and Egypt, very narrow, but exceeding deep, even to a Wonder, two Hundred Furlongs in length, call'd Serbon: If any through Ignorance approach it, they are lost irrecoverably; for the Channel being very narrow, like a Swadling-band, and compass'd round with vast heaps of Sand, great quantities of it are cast into the Lake, by the continu'd Southern Winds, which so cover the Surface of the Water, and make it to the view so like unto Dry Land, that it cannot possibly be distinguish'd; and therefore many unacquainted with the nature of the Place, by missing their way, have been there swallow'd up, together with whole Armies.[40]

The three lines from the epic, it will be noted, define the "frozen Continent," and the comparison is aptly designed to indicate wholesale disappearance on the gigantic order of Pharaoh's defeat in the Red Sea (I, 301-11).[41] Thompson claims still greater likelihood for Diodorus as

a source for much in Milton's epic, mentioning in particular the several references to "asphaltic" substances and citing Diodorus's full description of the Dead Sea, the original of the "Asphaltic Pool" (I, 411).

On the question of whether or not Milton's Hell is "fit habitation" for its occupants, we may look to God's words to the Son, which foresee the place of punishment as devoid of grace.[42] In these lines the distinction between angelic and mortal sin is also made:

> they themselves ordain'd thir fall.
> The first sort by thir own suggestion fell,
> Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd
> By th' other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
> The other none (III, 128-32)

And regarding this suitability for the devils, even Sin, as she addresses her son Death about his wicked sire's whereabouts, says:

> It cannot be
> But that success attends him; if mishap,
> Ere this he had return'd, with fury driv'n
> By his Avengers, since no place like this
> Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
> (X, 238-42)

This strange construction is explained by editors Carey and Fowler, who annotate the lines thus: "Like, i.e., so well as."[43]

On examining criteria for "fit habitation," Hell's characteristic remoteness immediately comes to mind. A phrase from the heavenly warfare episode serves to explain this utter isolation from God. Milton calls the rebelling angels an "Atheist crew" (VI, 370), which reminds us that there can be no more fitting fate for those who consciously refuse to believe in their creator than to be completely deprived of His presence. So deprived, they are cut off from the sum of goodness. Thus with grand alliteration, Milton describes the devils' state as "Hell thir fit

habitation fraught with fire" (VI, 876).

Therein is no pleasure that lasts. Indeed, though the poet establishes the consumptive nature of spiritual beings:

> what [God] gives
> (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
> Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found
> No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
> Intelligential substances require
> As doth your Rational (V, 404-09),

the only food seen in Hell partakes of the character of a phantom. It is the ashen fruit of the grove beside post-lapsarian Pandemonium, which springs up by divine decree simultaneous to the devils' brutish transformation. This is a change they are thereafter, with absolute decorum, "Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo/ This annual humbling certain number'd days,/ To dash thir pride, and joy for Man seduc't" (X, 575-77).

Near the beginning of the epic, it is made clear that with Christ's act of redemption "Heav'nly love shall outdo Hellish hate" (III, 298) and, what is of equal weight to Milton, that man's liberty is real, for "Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand/ On even ground against his mortal foe" (III, 178-79).[44] But no similar grace can touch the devils, for as Samuel says,

> With Dante, Milton holds . . . that the origin of evil, necessarily mysterious in a world created wholly good, is in the act of an evil will; that Highest Wisdom permits and indeed compels the Hell-making habit to enact itself endlessly; and that evil finally reduces itself to immobility.[45]

So end the disrespectors of God. But before we too finish, it is important that we properly identify Milton's invocation of his muse with those he intended to benefit by her succour. It is nonsense to claim that his alleged lionizing of the Devil can, or ever could, be

aligned with his humanism. No devil would he glorify: it was Adam and Eve he intended to help when he undertook "this great Argument" (I, 24), Paradise Lost. For them, time and time again as he earnestly summoned his muse, he hoped, as did Camoens in The Lusiads: "If my inspiration but prove equal to the task, all men shall know of them."[46]

NOTES

Chapter I

[1]The edition of the Aeneid I use throughout this work is The Aeneid of Virgil (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), Allen Mandelbaum, ed., and Barry Moser, illus. For pagination I similarly use St. Augustine's Confessions (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1961), trans. with intro. by R. S. Pine-Coffin. As for Alighieri Dante's Inferno, I employ Laurence Binyon's excellent translation, Dante's Inferno (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1933).

[2]Roland Mushat Frye, God, Man, and Satan (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 25-26. Regarding "accommodation" he cites Heinrich Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950), pp. 37-39.

[3]Frye, 23. He cites Barth's groundwork towards his conception of the absolute necessity of poetic treatment of the subject of evil from Otto Weber's Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, An Introductory Report (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), Vol. I:1 to III:4, trans. A. C. Cochrane, p. 196.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Lines 34-5. See Merritt Y. Hughes's John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1957), 16. This is the definitive edition I use throughout the paper. All the poetry excerpted from Milton's epic into the text of this thesis is from John Milton: "Paradise Lost" (New York: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1935), Merritt Y. Hughes, ed.

[6]Hughes, Complete Poems, 72, 11. 9-10.

[7]Cleanth Brooks, The Well Wrought Urn (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 64. Brooks discusses "The Light Symbolism in 'L'Allegro--Il Penseroso,'" pp. 50-66.

[8]Complete Poems, 102, 11. 515-16.

[9]Russell Noyes, ed., English Romantic Poetry and Prose (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 1192, 1. 30. Keats's poem was first published in 1820.

[10]Bergen Evans, Dictionary of Quotations (New York: Delacorte Press, 1968), 475, #17. The reader may also look at the Dictionary of the Bible (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1965), ed. Merrill C. Tenney, where the entry for SHEOL is:

> the OT name for the place of departed souls, corresponding to the NT word "Hades." When translated "hell" it refers to the place of punishment, but when translated "grave" the reference is to the souls of good men. It often means the place or state of the soul between death and resurrection. The clearest indication of different conditions in Sheol is in Christ's parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).

[11]A. B. Chambers, "Chaos in Paradise Lost," in the Journal of the History of Ideas, 24 (1963), 55-84. The argument is found in Complete Poems, p. 977, where Milton deals with matter in Chapter VII of Christian Doctrine, titled "Creation."

[12]Chambers points out that this explanation is given by Professor W. C. Curry in Milton's Ontology, Cosmogony, and Physics (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), pp. 70-72.

[13]Chambers, 68.

[14]Henry More, An Appendix to the Defence of the Threefold Cabbala (London, 1713), p. 185.

[15]Virgil, The Aeneid, VII, 864-70. The translation and line numbers I have used for this excerpt are Robert Fitzgerald's, in the Vintage Books edition (New York: Random House, 1983), p. 218.

[16]An example is Virgil's "Mezentius the cruel, despiser of the gods" (Aeneid, VII, 854-55 [Mandelbaum]). He is described in the Dictionary of Classical Mythology (Toronto: Bantam Books, Inc., 1971), J. E. Zimmerman, ed., as

> An extremely cruel king of the Tyrrhenians. He killed his subjects by slow tortures; he would tie a live man face to face with a corpse and let him die a lingering death. Finally expelled by his subjects, he fled to Turnus and fought against Aeneas, who killed him. Vergil [sic] calls him "scorner of the gods."

[17]Balachandra Rajan, Milton's Paradise Lost: Books I and II (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), xv-xvi. "The small seed of James" referred to is James 1:15: ". . . desire, when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown brings forth death." This passage is paralleled in Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death."

[18]George W. Whiting, "Tormenting Tophet," in Notes and Queries, 192 (May 31, 1947), 226. The tract by Henry Greenwood is Workes Contained in Six Several Treatises (London, 1624).

[19]Cited in Whiting, 228.

[20]Whiting, 229. The quotes are from Bolton's Last and Learned Worke.

[21]Rajan, xiv.

[22]Ibid., xvi.

[23]Cited by John Ower in "Edith Sitwell and the Atomic Bomb," in The American Benedictine Review, #27 (March 1976), 428, 3n.

[24]Joseph E. Duncan, "Milton's Four-in-One Hell," in The Huntington Library Quarterly, 20, 2 (February 1957), 127.

Chapter II

[1]"Many mansions in the Father's house" originates in John 14:2, where Jesus tells his disciples: "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" His reassurance was not, however, intended to evoke in his followers' minds the nascent torture-chamber my figure describes, yet Hell remains a room in Creation.

[2]X, 547-72.

[3]A. B. Chambers, "Chaos in Paradise Lost," in the Journal of the History of Ideas, 24 (1963), 55-84. The selection from Timaeus may be found in Plato: Selections (Scribner's Sons, 1927), Raphael Dimos, ed.

[4]Hughes. Paradise Lost, 48, 740n. I have included the material on Mulciber here because the primary essence of Milton's Hell is fire, and Vulcan was the pagan deity most artful in that element.

[5]See the introduction to the epic in Complete Poems, 179-80. A diagram of Prof. Curry's conception is included.

[6]This passage is ambiguous. Milton mixes angelic with human attributes in his "Banner'd Host." The extended wings of an angel force and the loosely ranked cavalry and chariots of an ancient human army are complementary in explicating the width of the opening, but the comparison deals in adverse elements. A volant host has no need of horse and chariots, notwithstanding the "Chariot of Paternal Deity," a vehicle supposed to represent pure Spirit and therefore self-motivated, on which the Son rode unstoppably to victory in Heaven's war. See VI, 750-52, and 750n.

[7]Refer to VI, 867-70.

[8]Origen wrote a lengthy exposition of the "metaphore" of hellfire, in which "every sinner kindles for himself the flames of his own fire." De Principiis, II, x, 4 (London, 1936), trans. G. W. Butterworth. The point is also pertinent to an understanding of the

psychological Hell.

[9]Saint Augustine, The City of God (New York: Random House, Inc., 1950), trans. Marcus Dods, intro. Thomas Merton, p. 354.

[10]Complete Poems, 253, 895-903n.

[11]Ibid., 446, 556-711n. Hughes's note explains that the figure Adam sees is "Tubal-Cain, 'an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron.'" The pertinence of this vision to a work on both an uninhabited and a demonic Hell is the notice Milton takes elsewhere in his poem of the relative skills of necessarily craftsmanlike post-lapsarian man and the devils who by their building changed the face of both Hell and Chaos.

Chapter III

[1]Trans. G. W. Butterworth. See Chapter II, note 8.

[2]Augustine, Confessions, V, 6, p. 97. The translation I use throughout is R. S. Pine-Coffin's in the Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1961).

[3]James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), pp. 120-21.

[4]C. A. Patrides, "Renaissance and Modern Views on Hell," in the Harvard Theological Review, 57 (1964), 220. Patrides annotates John Donne's homily and the points it contains thus:

> The Sermons of John Donne, ed. E. M. Simpson and G. R. Potter (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953-1962), III, 51.
>
> Chrysostom, Homiliae XC in Matthaeum, XXIII, 8: Gregory, Moralia, VI, 47, and IX, 97; Thomas, Summa Theologica, I, lxiv, 4.

[5]Ibid., 224-25. The edition of Marlowe's Faustus I use in this paper is The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, Frederick S. Boas, ed., in The Works and Life of Christopher Marlowe series, R. H. Case, gen. ed. (New York: Gordian Press, Inc., 1966). The full passage Patrides gives regarding looking into the jaws of Hell is from V, ii, 120-25:

> Now, Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare
> Into that vast perpetual torture-house.
> There are the furies, tossing damned souls
> On burning forks; their bodies boil in lead:
> There are live quarters broiling on the coals,
> That ne'er can die (Dr Faustus, 170)

[6]Ibid., 225.

[7]Sir John Stradling, Divine Poems (London, 1625), p. 290.

[8]Patrides, 225.

[9]Ibid.

[10]J. B. Broadbent, "Milton's Hell," in The Journal of English Literary History (ELH), 21 (September, 1954), 172. Emphasis is his.

[11]See Exodus 14.

[12]John M. Steadman, "Milton and Patristic Tradition: The Quality of Hell-Fire," in Anglia, 76 (1958), 116-28.

[13]Steadman, 116. He annotates the works he has mentioned thus:

L. C. Martin (ed.), The Poetical Works of Robert Herrick (Oxford, 1956), 387, "Hell-fire":

> The fire of Hell this strange condition hath,
> To burn, not shine (as learned Basil saith).

See my [Steadman's] note, "John Collop and the Flames Without Light," N&Q, n.s., II (1955), 582-3.

The Poems of John Donne, ed. Sir H. J. C. Grierson (London, 1945), 118.

David Masson (ed.), The Poetical Works of John Milton, III (London, 1890), 385.

[14]Ibid., 118.

[15]Chambers, "Chaos in Paradise Lost," 71, 64n. The ancient thinker was Patritius, whose ideas Gassendi notes in Physica, I.iii.3 (Opera, I, 216-17).

[16]Cited in John E. Hankins' "The Pains of the Afterworld: Fire, Wind, and Ice in Milton and Shakespeare," in Modern Language Association Publications (MLA), 71 (1956), 486. Professor Himes' translation is found in Paradise Lost, ed. Himes (New York, American, n.d.), p. 255.

[17]S. Bonaventura Opera Omnia, ed. PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura (Ad Claras Aquas [Quarracchi], 1889), IV, 925. Cited in Steadman's "Milton and Patristic Tradition," 122.

[18]Steadman, 124-25.

[19]Ibid., 128.

[20]The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. Fathers of

the English Dominican Province (London, 1922), Q. 97, A. 4, page 173. Cited in Steadman, 122.

[21]Robert J. Edgeworth, "Milton's 'Darkness Visible' and Aeneid 7," in The Classical Journal, 79, 2 (December-January 1983-84), 97.

[22]Edgeworth, ibid.

[23]Genesis 1:26 verifies that man is made in God's image: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" Biblical authority for man "a little lower than the angels" occurs in Psalm 8:5: "Yet thou hast made him little less than God," and in Hebrews 2:6-7, which paraphrases the psalm: "It has been testified somewhere, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou carest for him? Thou didst make him for a little while lower than the angels," and Hebrews 2:9, which affirms man's place in the transition from the old to the new covenant: "But we see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels." Tenney explains the slight elevation of the angels over man as one of dignity (Dictionary of the Bible [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing, 1965], Merrill C. Tenney, ed., 9).

[24]Exodus 10:4-15.

[25]Broadbent, 182.

[26]Ibid., 183.

[27]Ernest Schanzer, "Milton's Hell Revisited," in University of Toronto Quarterly, 24 (1955), 136-45.

[28]Schanzer, 140-41.

[29]Dustin Griffin, in "Milton's Hell: Perspectives on the Fallen," in Milton Studies (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), Vol. XIII, page 240, points out that "With a touch like 'mortal or immortal minds' Milton keeps before us the idea that the fallen angels are to be understood not only as followers of our great adversary, but as creatures who share with us a common condition."

[30]Ibid., 246.

[31]Schanzer, 139.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., 140.

[35]Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, p. 122.

[36]Russell Noyes, ed., English Romantic Poetry and Prose (New

York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 146, 11. 190-93.

[37]Balachandra Rajan, xxiv.

[38]William R. McClung, "The Architecture of Pandemonium," in Milton Quarterly, 15. 4 (December 1981), 110.

[39]Dante's Inferno, Lawrence Binyon, trans. (St. Martin's Street, London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1933), p. 83.

[40]Ibid., 95.

[41]Rajan, xxv.

[42]Broadbent, "Milton's Hell," 178.

[43]Rebecca W. Smith, "The Source of Milton's Pandemonium," in Modern Philology, XXIX, 2 (November 1931), 187-98.

[44]Ibid.

[45]An interesting sidelight to this has been noted by James Forrest, in regard to Satanic residency in "the limits of the North." When the devilish forces lay siege to Mansoul in Bunyan's Holy War, Diabolus makes shift to "entrench himself and his men in the field without the reach of the slings of the town." Among the four mounts erected in the encirclement is "Mount Diabolus, which was raised on the North side of the town, [and] there did the tyrant set up his standard." Forrest's note on the position of Mount Diabolus runs as follows:

> the North side: Bunyan is here invoking a long literary tradition that associates the North with the Devil and that ultimately derives from Isaiah's account of how Lucifer aspired to exalt himself "above the stars of God" by sitting "upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north" (Isa. 14:13).

John Bunyan's The Holy War (Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1967), James Forrest, ed. Originally published in 1682.

[46]Broadbent's "Milton's Hell," 177-78.

[47]Paradise Lost and the 17th Century Reader (London, 1947), 47, cited in Broadbent's "Milton's Hell," 180.

[48]Broadbent, ibid., 180.

[49]Augustine, City of God, xiii.

[50]John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1965), Roger Sharrock, ed.

[51]Duncan, "Milton's Four-in-One Hell." He considers that

> The civilization of hell is significant chiefly in its prefiguring of the hell-on-earth, the fallen world which is its own punishment. Milton's portrayal of the materialistic, disordered civilization that the fallen angels will transmit to men is appropriately introduced by the long catalogue of the pagan deities who, crossing the trans-Chaos bridge soon to be constructed by Sin and Death, will carry hell's civilization to earth. Their appearance in Book I is proleptic, portending the spread of idolatry and other evils.

Chapter IV

[1]James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), pp. 120-21, 122.

[2]St. Augustine, Confessions (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1961), p. 43.

[3]Balachandra Rajan, Milton's Paradise Lost: Books I and II (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), xxii.

[4]Merritt Y. Hughes, "Myself Am Hell," in Modern Philology, 54, 2 (November 1956), 85.

[5]St. Augustine, City of God (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1972), p. 535.

[6]C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce: A Dream (London: The Centenary Press, 1945), pp. 113-14.

[7]C. A. Patrides, "Renaissance and Modern Views on Hell," in the Harvard Theological Review, 57 (1964), 234. Patrides annotates his information on Catholic doings thus: J. P. Arendzen, "Eternal Punishment," in The Teaching of the Catholic Church, ed. George D. Smith (London, 1948), II, 1188. He found Whichcote's observations in Select Sermons (London, 1698), p. 417.

[8]Cited in Patrides, 236. In Eddy's Prose Works Other than Science and Health (Boston, 1925), see the chapter titled "Miscellaneous Writings," p. 237.

[9]Lewis, The Great Divorce, 113.

[10]St. Augustine, cited in Roland Mushat Frye's God, Man, and Satan (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 23-4. From Augustine's Earlier Writings (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), tr. and ed. by John H. S. Burleigh, p. 237. In regard to Satan's "myself am Hell" soliloquy, something may be added by the words of Lucifer in Philip J. Bailey's Festus (1839), in the section called "heaven" (n.p.):

"God's wrath/ Am I to myself; and for that wrath inheres/ In evil as sin, am bound to do my part." This sort of thinking adds to the sense of fatedness in all Satanic endeavour.

[11]J. B. Broadbent, "Milton's Hell," in A Journal of English Literary History (ELH), 21, 3 (September 1954), 165.

[12]Grant McColley, "Paradise Lost," in the Harvard Theological Review, XXXII (1939), 206.

[13]Alfred J. A. Waldock, Paradise Lost and Its Critics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947), p. 93.

[14]A sideline of some worth here is modern author George Santayana's observation that "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to fulfil it," in Life of Reason, or, The Phases of Human Progress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905-06), Vol. 1, Ch. xii, n. p.

[15]Waldock, Paradise Lost and Its Critics, ibid.

[16]Exodus 21:23 speaks of the punishment for harming a woman with child in pre-Christian Sinai: "If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."

Again, Leviticus 24:20 advises the ancient Hebrews: "When a man causes a disfigurement in his neighbour, as it has been done it shall be done to him, fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has disfigured a man, he shall be disfigured."

[17]St. Augustine, Confessions, V, 2, p. 92.

[18]Ernest Schanzer, "Milton's Hell Revisited," in University of Toronto Quarterly (UTQ), 24 (1955), 145.

[19]Sacvan Bercovitch, "Three Perspectives on Reality in Paradise Lost," in The University of Windsor Review, 1,2 (Winter 1965), 243.

[20]Ibid., 248.

[21]Ibid., 249.

[22]D. P. Walker, The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth Century Discussions of Eternal Torment (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 24.

[23]Hughes, Paradise Lost, 61, 628n. Hughes adds that these creatures are "symbolic like the 'unnumbered spectres' of Virgil's hell."

[24]The diagram of Walter Clyde Curry's conception is reproduced in the introduction to Milton's epic in Complete Poems, 180.

[25]Ibid. A wider discussion of Milton's cosmos is found in Professor Curry's valuable book Milton's Ontology, Cosmogony, and Physics

(Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957).

[26]Schanzer, "Milton's Hell Revisited," 136.

[27]Dustin Griffin, "Milton's Hell: Perspectives on the Fallen," in Milton Studies (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), Vol. XIII, 248-49.

[28]Hughes, "Myself Am Hell," 85. Much of the familiarity of Milton's readers with the classical rivers of the underworld stemmed from Book VI of the Aeneid, from which the poet drew the attributes of Hades' rivers.

[29]Hughes, "Milton's Hell," 188.

[30]An aside might be made here regarding this aspect of the psychological Hell. A fictional modern treatment of human emotion under totalitarian control is animator Ralph Bakshi's film Wizards (1977), an epic cartoon about a post-holocaust Oz in which the dark sorceror elevates his mutant troops to the battle frenzy by screening for them 1930s and 1940s footage of the rise of the Third Reich, including the panoply and mass-mentality of that fascist state.

[31]John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1965), pp. 307-08.

[32]Bhagavad Gita (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1962), ch. XVI, l. 21, p. 111.

[33]Rajan, xxviii.

[34]Paradise Regained, III, 204-11.

Chapter V

[1]D. P. Walker, The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century Discussions of Eternal Torment (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 40.

[2]C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce: A Dream (London: The Centenary Press, 1945), p. 113.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Joseph E. Duncan, "Milton's Four-in-One Hell," in The Huntington Library Quarterly, 20, 2 (February 1957), 128.

[7]Ibid., 134.

[8]Mark Crispin Miller, "Beelzebub and Adam and 'The Worst That Can Be,'" in Milton Studies (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), Vol. X, ed. James D. Simmonds, p. 72.

[9]Dustin Griffin, "Milton's Hell: Perspectives on the Fallen," in Milton Studies (1979), Vol. XIII, ed. James D. Simmonds, p. 250.

[10]Ibid., 251.

[11]Irene Samuel, Dante and Milton: The 'Commedia' and 'Paradise Lost' (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 73.

[12]Ll. 31-129. In his introduction to the canto, Binyon says, "This episode seems introduced by way of humorous relief." Dante's Inferno, p. 247.

[13]Hilaire Belloc, Milton (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1935), p. 50.

[14]Belloc, ibid.

[15]Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy (Penguin, 1982), trans. and intro., V. E. Watts, p. 140.

[16]Ibid., 155.

[17]"Greek fire" is the combustible composition used to ignite enemy ships and fortifications in medieval times.

[18]Milton's probable acquaintance with the volcanic area near Naples, made during the Italian journey of 1638-39, is commented on at length by Marjorie Nicolson in "Milton's Hell and the Phlegraean Fields," in The University of Toronto Quarterly, 7 (1937-38), 500-13. His reaction to total blindness after his forty-third year (ca. 1651) is recorded in his nineteenth sonnet, "When I Consider How My Light is Spent," in Complete Poems, 168.

[19]II, 746-802.

[20]John E. Hankins, "The Pains of the Afterworld: Fire, Wind, and Ice in Milton and Shakespeare," in Modern Language Association Publications, #71 (1956), 485. Hankins took the idea from the Moralium of St. Gregory the Great, a commentary on Job written ca. 600. St. Augustine's observations are from Confessions, I, 18, p. 38.

[21]Olin H. Moore, "The Infernal Council," in Modern Philology, #16 (August, 1918), 169-93. This is a study to trace the development of the demonic consult from Claudian and the Gospel of Nicodemus, through Robert de Boron, Bocaccio, Sannazaro, Vida, and Tasso, to Milton.

[22]Moore, 170.

[23]Ibid., 179.

[24]The Mirour de l'omme of John Gower (d. 1408) is a French poem of about 30,000 lines, which, in the form of an allegory of the human soul, describes the seven deadly sins and their opposite virtues. The only extant copy was published at Oxford in 1899.

[25]J. S. P. Tatlock, "Milton's 'Sin' and 'Death,'" in Modern Language Notes, #21 (1906), 240. Again, however, Milton's primary source is the Bible, notably James 1:15.

[26]Griffin, 242.

[27]Though the translation is Mandelbaum's, the line numbers here are from Virgil's original.

[28]Griffin, 243.

[29]Ibid., 244.

[30]Ibid., 245.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Balachandra Rajan, Milton's Paradise Lost: Books I and II (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), xxvi. Emphasis is my own.

[33]E. M. Forster, "The Celestial Omnibus," in Fiction 100: An Anthology of Short Stories (New York: Macmillan Publishing Ltd., 1978), ed. James Pickering. Pages 341, 343.

[34]Hankins, 482.

[35]Ibid., 482-83.

[36]Hankins supplies the following bibliographical information:

i) [Vision of William.] Thomas Wright, Saint Patrick's Purgatory (London, 1844), 147, and Howard R. Patch, The Other World (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), 112.

ii) [Bede's Vision of Dryhthelm.] Ecclesiastical History, Bk. V, Ch. xii. In the OE Genesis B, sinners remain in one place, but the climate varies from extreme heat during the day to extreme cold at night.

iii) [For the Vision of the Monk of Evesham.] The Revelation of the Monk of Evesham, Arber's Reprint, Ch. xvii.

[37]Hankins, 283, n4. He found the Vision of Alberic reprinted in Miscellanea Cassinese (Montecassino, 1932), and in French by J. H. Marchand, L'Autre Monde au Moyen Age (Paris, 1940), 117-83.

[38]Elbert N. S. Thompson, "Milton's Knowledge of Geography," in Studies in Philology, 16 (1919), 155.

[39]Thompson, ibid. The excerpt from the Brief History may be found in the Columbia Edition of The Works of John Milton (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1932), Vol. X, p. 332.

[40]Thompson, 161.

[41]Exodus 14.

[42]See Sacvan Bercovitch's "Three Perspectives on Reality in Paradise Lost," in The University of Windsor Review, 1, 2 (Winter 1965), 239-56.

[43]The Poems of John Milton (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1968), John Carey and Alastair Fowler, eds., 937. The edition is part of Longmans' Annotated English Poets, F. W. Bateson, gen. ed.

[44]Here I have paraphrased Winifred Hunt, from "On Even Ground: A Note on the Extramundane Location of Hell in Paradise Lost," in Modern Language Quarterly, 23 (1962), 18-19.

[45]Samuel, 84.

[46]Luis Vaz de Camoens, The Lusiads (Penguin Classics, 1952), p. 39. It is the dauntless Portuguese explorers cum traders cum soldiers who opened up the Far East to European maritime presence whom Camoens wishes to laud in the preamble to his first Canto.

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